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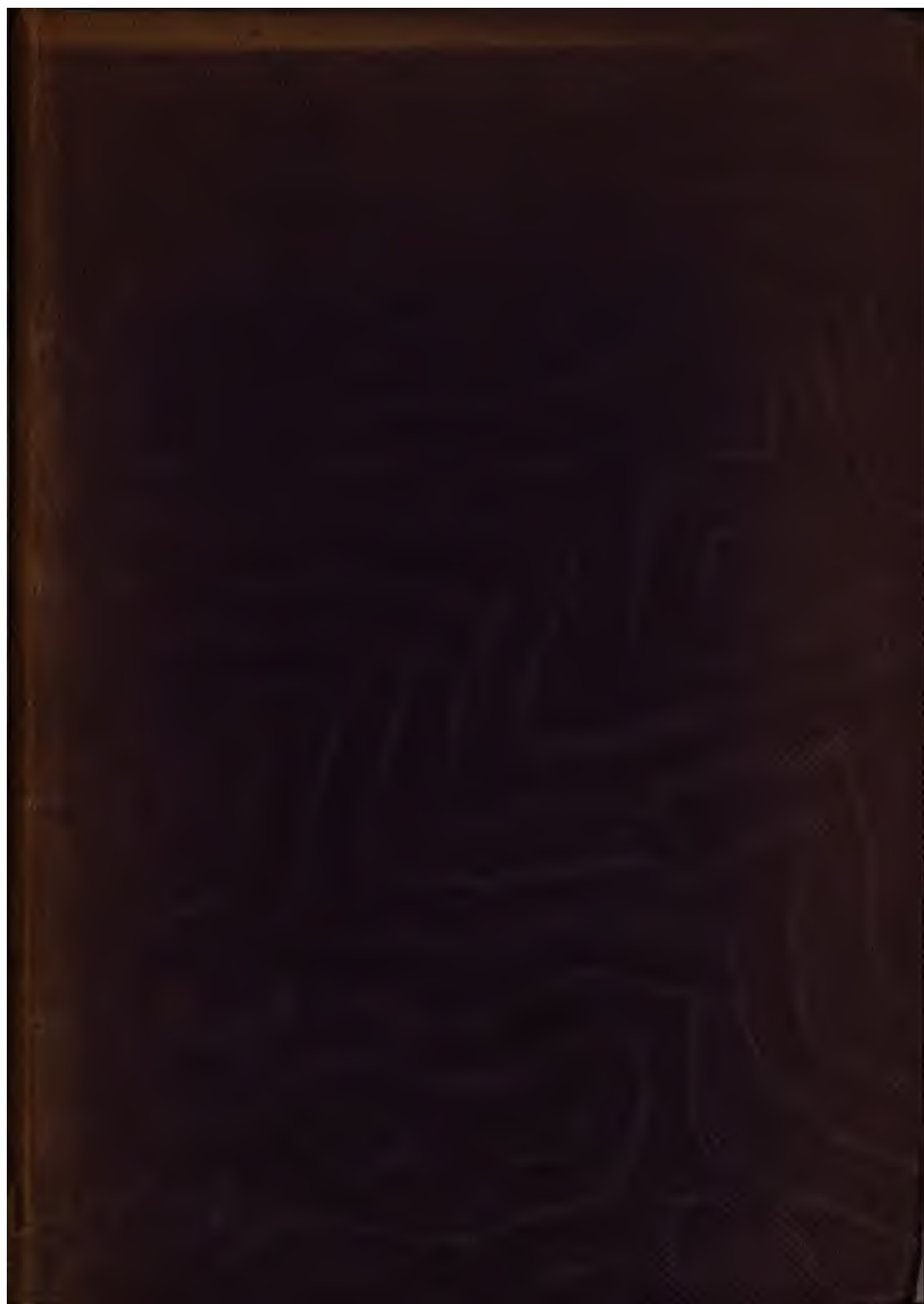
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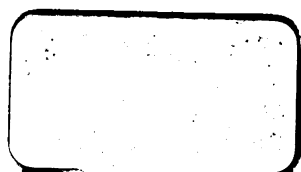
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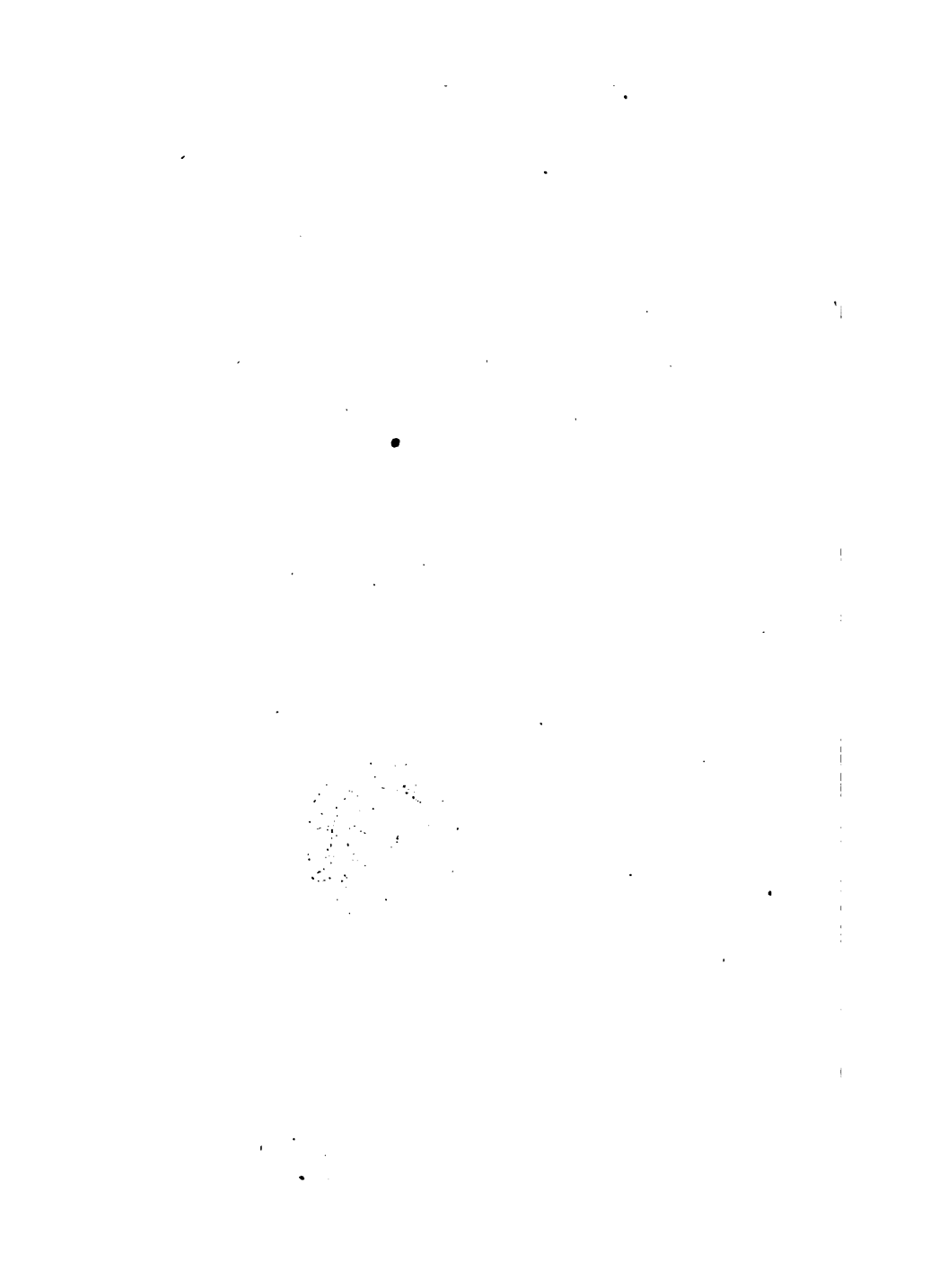
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THE King's Highway.

"And a highway shall be there, and a way; and it shall be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, for He shall be with them: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."—ISA. xxxv. 8, margin.

FIRST YEAR



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THE King's Highway.

CHRIST THE WAY.

"Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths; Which is the good way? and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."—Jer. vi. 16.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."—Matt. xi. 28, 29.

WHITHER should the children go but to the Father? for it is the distinction even of the "little children," that they "have known the Father."

When Jesus was going to the Father He said, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." The Shepherd was going before, and it was meet the sheep should follow Him. By the grace of God we seek to follow Jesus to the bosom of the Father, that our fellowship may be with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We desire, by the same grace, to be helpful to our fellow-disciples, that they also may have fellowship with us. Therefore we write about "The King's Highway." For though this world be to the Lord's wayfaring men a parched ground and a thirsty land, yet "a Highway shall be there, and a Way." That Way is Jesus. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

The King's Highway is a holy way. "It shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it." How vainly did the Unclean endeavour to pass over that holy Way;

when He was an hungered tempting Him to eat ; when He had emptied Himself of all his heavenly glory, and was amongst the wild beasts in the wilderness, luring Him with all the kingdoms of this world if He would fall down and worship him ; and taking occasion by his very faith in God to induce Him presumptuously to tempt the Lord his God by casting Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. But the prince of this world came and found nothing in Him. Jesus is the Way of Holiness. May our souls experimentally know that way. The unclean soul shall not pass over it ; for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." The Lamb, who is the Way to the Father, is also the Light of that heavenly City, into which, "there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie ; but they who are written in the Lamb's book of life." "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the City." "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments ; and his commandments are not grievous." "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment."

The King's Highway is a secret way ; "a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it. It is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air." None of the princes of this world knew God's hidden Wisdom, "for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." "For they that dwelt at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, fulfilled them in condemning Him." But the stricken sinner knows the Way. The woman who washed his feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, knew the Way to God. And when some said that He was Elijah, or Jeremiah, or John the Baptist, or one of the prophets, Simon Peter confessed, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Dear reader, do you know this Way ? Then blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but thy Father who is in heaven.

The King's Highway is a safe way. "No lion shall be there,

nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon ; it shall not be found there ; but the redeemed shall walk there." " Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the Door ; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." The Living Way was amongst the wild beasts in the wilderness ; but they had no power to go up thereon. And the passions which, like ravenous beasts and hateful birds, make their hold in our fallen nature, found no habitation in the Holy One. Would we be free from the power of the roaring Lion of the pit ? The King's Highway is the only path he dare not tread. It is a new and living way, and the Old Serpent who had the power of death has been destroyed by the blood wherewith it has been consecrated. " The redeemed shall walk there." " Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh ; and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

The King's Highway is a rejoicing way. " And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Though He who was the Way, the Truth, and the Life, was the Man of sorrows ; yet down deeper than his sorrow was the fountain of an everlasting joy. And so He said, " These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." " Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." " These things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." And the loving apostle declares that which he and his fellow-apostles had seen and handled of the Word of Life, that we, with them, might have fellowship with the Father and the Son, that our joy might be full.

The King's Highway is mapped out in the Bible. The written word is the brightness of the glory and the express image of the person of the Living Word ; even as the Son is of the invisible God. As the Spirit may give them utterance, the writers in this periodical desire rightly to divide the word of truth ; following in the footsteps of Him, who, " beginning at Moses and all the

prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning Himself."

This endeavour to help wayfaring men on their way to Zion is commended to the prayers of all who love the Lord of the way, and who are obedient to his word: "Wherefore, lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."

A HYMN AND PRAYER FOR GRACE.

WRITTEN FOR "THE KING'S HIGHWAY."

O THOU that makest souls to shine
 With light from lighter worlds above;
 And droppest glistening dew divine
 On all who seek a Saviour's love:

Do Thou thy benediction give
 On all who teach and all who learn,
 That all thy Church may holier live,
 And every lamp more brightly burn.

Give those that teach pure hearts and wise,
 Faith, hope, and love, all warmed by prayer;
 Themselves first training for the skies,
 They best will raise their brethren there.

Give those that learn the willing ear,
 The lowly heart, the guileless mind:
 Such gifts will make the meanest here
 Far better than a kingdom find.

Oh bless the shepherds, bless the sheep!
 That guides and guided both be one:
 One in the faithful watch they keep,
 Until this hurrying life be gone.

If thus, good Lord, thy grace be given,
 Our glory meets us ere we die:
 Before we upward pass to heaven,
 We taste our immortality.

C. C.

SANCTIFICATION BY FAITH.—I.

BY THE REV. S. GARRATT.

BEFORE entering on the subject itself, a few words may be well to explain an apparent difference, which is not a real one, in the manner in which Christian men express themselves. The most opposite doctrines may be taught almost in the same words, and the same doctrine may be taught in very different words. It is of great importance to truth and love to distinguish in both cases.

The word *sanctify* is used in two senses in the Bible: *to reckon holy*, as when it is said, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts;"* and *to make holy*, as when it is said, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." The noun *sanctification* appears to me only used in Scripture in the second of these senses; but as the verb *sanctify* is used most frequently, and always in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the first of these senses, it cannot be fairly called unscriptural, though it may be inexpedient, to use the noun *sanctification* in a similar sense, so that this sense is not given it in texts which require the other.

The two words *justification* and *sanctification* are formed, in the original, the one from the word *righteous*, and the other from the word *holy*. The difference between *holiness* and *righteousness* is only in the way in which we look at them. The holiness of Christ, when thought of as meritorious, is called *righteousness*; and for this reason, instead of saying that holiness is imputed to the believer, which would not be incorrect, we generally say, and Scripture says, that *righteousness* is imputed to him, which is more correct, and prevents the error of losing sight of the holiness which is imparted to him. For the same reason it is better to follow the example set us in the Bible (notwithstanding the double meaning of *sanctify*), of using *justification* for the reckoning Christ's holy acts, both of suffering and obedience, or in one word his righteousness, to the believer's account, and *sanctification* only for the work of the Holy Ghost in the be-

* The distinction between *sanctify*, used in the first sense, and *justify*, is simply that in the one case the reference is to the types of the ceremonial law, in the other case to the proceedings of a court of justice.

liever's heart. *Justification* is the reckoning all that is Christ's as mine, my completeness in Him; and *sanctification*, which we are now to consider, is that which is inward, the Spirit's work within the already justified believer.

The word translated *sanctification* occurs only in the following passages, sometimes rendered *sanctification*, sometimes *holiness*: Romans vi. 19, 22—"Yield your members servants to righteousness unto *holiness*;" "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God ye have your fruit unto *holiness*;" 1 Thess. iv. 3, 4—"For this is the will of God, even your *sanctification*, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in *sanctification* and honour;" "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness but unto holiness;" 2 Thess. ii. 13—"Sanctification of the Spirit;" 1 Tim. ii. 15—"If they continue in faith, and charity, and *holiness*, with sobriety;" 1 Peter. i. 2—"Sanctification of the Spirit;" in which it must indisputably mean the inward work of the Holy Ghost in the believer's heart, acting on his outward life; and in two other texts, of which the interpretation is disputed, 1 Cor. i. 30, and Heb. xii. 14. In Heb. xii. 14, "Follow peace with all men, and *holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord," the connexion with a peaceable spirit, and the command to follow it, show that it is an inward grace and an object of pursuit to the believer. *Justification* the believer has not to follow or pursue; he has it as perfectly the moment he believes, as when he stands before the throne. And in 1 Cor. i. 30, to understand *sanctification* of any thing exterior to the believer's own heart, is to make it mean the same thing as *justification*, and therefore, to render the clause superfluous. If by "Christ is made unto us righteousness," is meant that all that is Christ's is mine, his sufferings mine, his obedience mine, that I am in the sight of God as He is; "Jesus Christ is made unto us *sanctification*" must mean something distinct from this, and sanctification must relate not to what is without me but to what is within me, must relate to inward holiness, as in all the other texts. In short, by "Jesus Christ is made unto us righteousness," I understand all that those who interpret the next word differently understand by "Jesus Christ is made unto us *sanctification*," or holiness, righteousness being only holiness looked on as meritorious; and therefore by "Jesus Christ is made unto us *sanctification*," something altogether different.

How our personal holiness is derived from Christ, will appear in considering in what way sanctification is by faith. But I am anxious that it should be seen what statements are opposed, and what are identical. Those who teach that justification is, or includes, a change of heart and life; and those who use the word *sanctification*, as Paul himself, in Hebrews, uses the word *sanctify*, for Christ's work for us, in short, for justification, as well as for the Spirit's work in us; both use the word justification and sanctification interchangeably. But their doctrines are the antipodes of each other. The first destroy the gospel by doing away with justification altogether; the second teach the whole truth about justification, and the whole truth about sanctification; and the only objection to their use of the word *sanctification* in that double sense in which Paul uses the word *sanctify*, is, that by so doing they are sometimes supposed to teach the very opposite to that which they do teach. It is very important to see that there is perfect agreement in doctrine among some between whom there is this slight difference in the use of a word. It is a mere question of nomenclature, and there is something to be said in favour of both. The reader will understand that in what follows, by *justification* is intended the reckoning of all that is Christ's to the believer, and by *sanctification*, the work of grace in the believer's heart and life; and what we are going to consider is God's method of sanctification, or sanctification by faith.

Sanctification is constantly mentioned in Scripture without being named; for instance, in Romans v. 2, which will serve as a basis for the following remarks. The whole of the first verse, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," refers to the sinner's justification. It is sometimes supposed that "peace with God" means inward peace of heart, which is a part of our sanctification, or our being made holy, whereas, it really means being reconciled to God, having the condition changed, so as to be no longer looked on in God's sight as an enemy; but, on the contrary, instead of a rebel, counted as being, through Christ, deserving in the highest degree of God's favour, and invested with glory and immortality. And not only is the verse all occupied with this subject; but it comprises all that need be said on the subject; the thing itself, "justification;" the instrument by which it is received, "faith;" the result of it,

"peace with God," acceptance into his favour; and the cause of it, "by our Lord Jesus Christ."

Sometimes we are said to be "in Christ," which shows the reason of our acceptance. As He is so are we in God's sight. Here it is said to be by or through Christ, which shows the cause of it. It is not our righteousness but his, which deserves the favour. We are received on his account, and though in ourselves utterly unrighteous, yet through his merits accepted and justified; all which is said completely and roundly, so as to need nothing else to be said, in the words, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

What follows is equally distinct, and has nothing to do with our justification, but refers wholly and entirely to our sanctification; "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

"The grace wherein we stand" is an inward state of mind. That it is so seems clear from its being joined with rejoicing and hope. It is quite true that grace may, and often does, mean nothing but the favour of God; but here it seems rather to mean the result of that favour in the creation of a new life within. That new creation within is called grace, because the effect of God's grace or favour; as it is also called spirit because it is the work of God's Spirit in the heart. There is within the believer's heart a new spring of being. It is not only true that he has been accepted of God in Christ Jesus, but it is also true that he has been made partaker of a new life. We cannot too carefully keep these things distinct. They are sometimes mixed up through a confusion of thought; but, whether the words are in fault or the thoughts are in fault, it always produces evil. These are points which every Christian man may understand. There is no reason whatever why believers should have indistinct ideas about such matters as justification and sanctification. They are written in the Bible as with a sunbeam. If they are not clear to you, if you can only express them in words which contain no sharp definite meaning, it is because you have not given your mind to the point. I am speaking of believers; it is otherwise with those who are not Christians. There is a marvellous blindness in their hearts, which prevents them from seeing things clearly; but when that veil has been removed, it is only a want of attention, a habit of

looking at things without looking *through* things, that on this particular matter makes their thoughts obscure and their words misty.

Grace exhibits itself in many different ways; but it always is the accordance of the mind and heart with God. In the sense in which we are considering it now, of the inward work of God's Spirit in the soul, it is always holiness, at all events in the germ. This holiness consists in a mind conformed to God's mind; it shows itself in those dispositions, words, actions, thoughts, feelings, motives, which are pleasing to Him. The fruits of the Spirit are the results of grace. "The fruit of the Spirit," Paul says, "is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Our sanctification is the development of this fruit, of which the seed is sown in regeneration; and you will observe, that while some of these fruits of the Spirit are what we should all naturally speak of as holiness, others of them we should have counted rather as privileges than as duties. "Joy" and "peace" come next to "love" in the enumeration. The distinction between duty and privilege is not a wide one; it is the believer's duty to be happy—it is his privilege to be holy. The grace in which believers stand is that of happy holiness, and holy happiness.

Those have not learned anything aright, who have not found out that their happiness consists in holiness, and that, instead of holiness being the way to salvation, it is itself a part of salvation. Here it is that the Christian and the man of the world cannot understand each other. They look upon holiness in two entirely different lights. The unsaved one looks at it, reads, perhaps, that list of the fruits of the Spirit, and is ready to say, "If I could but do those things, I should be safe; but they are so hard, so difficult, so unpleasant, I wish they were cut down to my level." The saved one looks at it, and is ready to say, "How beautiful! how delightful! how glad I am to see what I am to be—what God will make me to become! I find in myself so much that fills me with grief and shame; but here is the pattern to which I am to be conformed. This is what I shall be."

Sanctification consists in these things. It may be seen in all the daily circumstances of life; it has to do with all our concerns, and finds its sphere, not only in divine things, but in all

the daily business of life. All things can be done in a holy way, the most common duties can be sanctified, and made to glow with the light of heaven. Grace moulds and fashions all things; and it is not in what we are pleased to consider religious works only that it is shown, but in all the most ordinary affairs. Things which others do without any holiness may be so done by the child of God as to make the most simple act divine. There is a dash of heaven about it; and, though in itself nothing, yet it does become well-pleasing to God Himself.

Sanctification means children obeying parents—wives loving husbands, and husbands loving wives—men dealing honestly one with another—diligence in business, and other such plain matters done before God. We must never forget that it includes these things. When grace reaches a heart, it interferes with everything, it leaves no corner unvisited. It is not content to compromise matters; but it must have the whole. And while Satan would be glad enough to give up part if he might keep the rest, Christ will make no such agreement. He claims the whole man, body, soul, and spirit; all the actions, all the words, all the motives, all the life; and the grace in which his people stand has respect to it all. It is an inward state of mind, which gives its colour to the whole life, and affects all the actions. It results in obedience to God's law, in conformity to God's mind, in resemblance to God Himself; completed, it is glory. For this is the glorified state, to be holy as God is holy, and pure as He is pure.

I have endeavoured to state what sanctification is, and in the following number will proceed to show how it is that we are sanctified by faith.

HOW TO BE HAPPY.

If you want to be miserable, look within.

If you want to be distracted, look around.

If you want to be happy, look up.

Onward, upward, homeward, heavenward; looking unto Jesus.

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—I.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

WE enter on the preparation of these notes with a vivid sense of the difficulty of the task. The greatest interpreters have approached the profound and sublime words of John's Gospel with shrinking and awe. Not that the dimness of the light in the writing deters ; it is its depth, "like the body of heaven in its clearness." Something, however, of its wondrous fulness and glory we may attempt to unfold. May it be given us, in reverent faithfulness and loving sympathy, taught by the Spirit, to adduce the meaning and apply the lessons of this tenderest and most elevated of the Gospels ; striving, in words borrowed from John, in one of his other writings, to "show that eternal Life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us."

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him ; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life ; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness ; and the darkness comprehended it not."—John i. 1—5.

In these verses, forming the first part of the noble proem or introduction which John has prefixed to his life of Jesus, he lets us see at once his high and distinctive aim in writing it. It is to testify to Jesus as the personal Son of God, revealed in human nature for the salvation of man. The other evangelists lead us to the human in Emmanuel, and through the human to the divine. John begins with the divine, and shows it radiating out through the human. In Matthew, Mark and Luke, with varying relations, we behold the earthly life of the Christ, full, indeed, of God ; but John more expressly and constantly links that terrestrial manifestation with the eternal life, so to say, surrounding it ; before, above, in it, undervied, unchanging, everlasting ; even as our Lord's own words, recorded by John elsewhere, begin with this, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore." Accordingly, while Mark sets out with the ministry of the

14 *Notes in Exposition of the Gospel by John.*

Baptist, Matthew with the birth of the Saviour, Luke with that of John and some antecedent circumstances; while even in their genealogies Matthew but traces the Messiah's lineage back to Abraham, and Luke to Adam: John conducts our thoughts at once into the remote eternity, and declares the true and supreme divinity of the great subject of his record; while all through the book his witness is to the Divine Person who came from the Father, is one with the Father, showed the Father, and went to the Father. Striking his lofty key-note in this opening paragraph, the evangelist declares, in succession, the eternal God-head, the universal Creatorship, and the inherent, self-sustained, quickening, and illumining life of the Son of God. These doctrines are announced with the utmost clearness, and with the emphatic fewness of words with which men are accustomed to clothe axiomatic truths. The whole passage is characterized by a striking terseness and simplicity of expression, fraught, at the same time, with the loftiest thought. Every word is plain, every proposition short; but the truth uttered in each is grand and glorious.

We have, first, the true and proper deity of the Son declared. "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" We have said the deity of the Son; for two things are abundantly manifest, that the evangelist speaks of a person, and that the person of whom he speaks is the only-begotten of the Father. The fourteenth verse makes this much indisputable. But why is He called the Word? The term, it may be noticed, employed as a personal designation of the Son of God, is found in Scripture in the writings of John alone. We need not ask where he found it, though it is interesting enough to know that, before he wrote, some of the Alexandrine Jews used it with something like the same application. It is probable that among Christians at the date of this gospel it was, if not familiar, at least well understood. Be that as it may, it has here Divine sanction, and we may reverently inquire into its significance. Now, as word or speech expresses thought, brings it out, embodies, manifests it; so the Word is He who manifests, reveals, makes known God. This is the doctrine of verse 18 in this chapter, "*The only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*" It is the doctrine of the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. i. 3, where the Son of God is spoken of as the brightness of

the glory of God, and the express image of his person; *brightness* being effulgence or outshining; and *express image* being an exact representation, as impression on wax shows the seal. The name Word, thus explained, may be compared with the title Wisdom, given to the Son of God in Prov. viii; and with the formula "God said," so frequently used in Gen. i. Ps. xxx. 6 may also be consulted; and the remarkable phraseology common in the pages of the prophets, "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying." The teaching is, that the Son of God is the Word; because, in nature and providence, and pre-eminently in redemption, He reveals the Father. Of this Word three things are affirmed in the verse before us: He was in the beginning, was with God, and was God. He was *in the beginning*. The connexion shows that this phrase must be taken in the most absolute sense. The first of beginnings, the commencement of created things must be intended. It is "the beginning" of the first verse of Genesis. But to be in the beginning is the prerogative of nothing which itself begins. He who is in the beginning is before it; only when, in our thought, we go back to the first commencement, we have reached the bound of time—of duration, which has successiveness of moments; we have come to the earliest of dates, and the word *before* is only a word in conformity to our weakness, as unable to grasp the idea of eternity in which the beginning arises. According to our possible modes of conception, however, to be in the beginning is to be before it, to be from everlasting. The Word, therefore, is Himself without beginning, the Eternal One. Next, He *was with God*. This is not mere co-existence with God, eternity implies that; nor mere presence, co-existence implies that. The thought is, distinction, with close relationship. Illustrate it by the words in Wisdom, in the Book of Proverbs, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. Then I was by him, as one brought up with him." Think also of our Lord's language in his intercessory prayer to the Father, "the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Finally, *the Word was God*. Though personally distinct from the Father, He was yet essentially one with Him. He was divine; the true, living, eternal God.

When, in the second verse, it is said, "*The same was in the beginning with God*," the evangelist may seem simply to repeat,

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for emphasis' sake, and in combination, the statements of the first two clauses of the preceding verse ; but there is an additional thought, forming a transition to the full declaration of the universal creatorship of the Word. "In the beginning," here, is not before, or at the beginning ; but in the act of beginning. It is not a date now merely ; but a work. In that very beginning the Son was co-operating with the Father, was declaring the Father. The Son was not idly by in the hour of creation ; but "by him God made the worlds." In the next verse this is asserted in the most absolute and emphatic way which it is possible to conceive. Let any person try to find a simple form of words in which universal creatorship can be ascribed more fully, and plainly, and impressively, and he will fail. The first clause is all-comprehensive and clear enough ; but the assertion is repeated in a new and yet more forcible way. Often, in the New Testament, the affirmative and negative are used in combination to give strength to a statement. Paul's "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not," is one example of many (see Luke i. 20 ; John i. 20, iii. 15 ; 1 John i. 6). Such emphatic combination is here, "All things were made by him ; nothing," not even one thing (as it reads), "was made without him." The force of language can go no further than this. Observe, only, in addition, how exactly accurate in another way the phraseology is. We do not read, Nothing was made except by Him, that is, by anyone but Him ; that would have excluded the Father and the Spirit ; but nothing was made without Him. If there be further comment on this verse let it be in the words of the apostle, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him ; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

We come now to the third grand declaration respecting the Son of God contained in this passage, "*In him was life.*" There are two thoughts included here : He was self-existent ; He derived his life from none, He had it, held it in Himself. How different it is with creatures ! "In Him we live ;" but "*In Him was life.*" We live, moreover, in Him, because life is in Him. For this, also, is suggested by the words. He is the giver of life. Life is in Him as in a fountain, to feed ten thousand streams. This

thought furnishes an easy transition to what follows. "*The life was the light of men.*" The expression here is to be carefully weighed. Why have we not, *the life was the life of men*? This is included; but the life, in quickening, is the Word, the Revealer; and light is the word to express this; for "whatsoever doth make manifest is light." Then why not, *the light was the light of men*? Because, to say that in Him was light would be improper. God is light; God is in the light; but light is not in God, its very nature is outshining. But further, and especially, it is the life that is the light, to show that men to be illumined must be quickened. It is the light of life that is intended; not light as to dead matter, but living soul and thinking spirit. It is light, moreover, in the case of men fallen, given to them as by quickening from the dead: "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee *light*." We have said in the case of fallen men, not excluding unfallen Adam from the thought in the clause—the life was the light of men. The light shining in Adam, and unto him, was from the Son of God; he was made in the image of God. But the evangelist, if he takes in this view, does not let us dwell on it. Ah! there was no room for dwelling upon it; for soon it came to be true of the Light of men, that He *shineth in darkness*. Here, too, we need not shut out the light that by conscience, reason, nature, still shone to man, though fallen; it was true of this, that, so far as it was light, it was from the Word, and very true that the darkness comprehended it not; but as the Word is spoken of not as light, but *the light*, the very phrase applied to Him when it is said that He was witnessed to by John, the reference must be mainly to the Son of God revealed as the Saviour. Of Him it is said He *shineth in darkness*; the present being used to express a truth applicable to all dispensations. Afterwards, the evangelist distinguishes, but here he speaks with the widest reference. He does not say, however, the darkness comprehends it not; because the time was coming, though it had not yet been, when the shadows would flee away, and earth enjoy risen day. But hitherto the darkness comprehended not, understood not, received not the light, and therefore was not dispelled by it. In the case of natural light, you justly say, it is the very nature of darkness to receive it; if the light shine in darkness it must be seen, it must illumine. Take a lamp

into the sunshine, and the greater light eclipses it, repels it, as we may say, refuses it; but take it into the gloom, and it is welcomed. Why then does this darkness not comprehend the light? Because it is the darkness of death. Put a lamp in the sepulchral vault, and it shines; but not to the eye of the corse lying there. Or rather, it is the darkness of men, who, though dead, yet in their death resist, while they cannot receive, the light of truth. They must be quickened by the life before they see the *light*: "For the carnal man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Such are the sublime truths respecting the Saviour with which John introduces his record of the Divine life on earth. It will be found that all through the book these great leading thoughts are kept in view: Jesus revealing God; Jesus the life; Jesus the light; Jesus all this, as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. The Word, the Life, the Light, the Lamb. May we know Him as all these to us. Meanwhile, in view of what we find taught us in the paragraph we have reviewed, what should be our thoughts, what the expression of them?—"Oh, come, and let us worship him; let us bow down before the Lord our Maker." "O Lord, thou preservest man and beast. How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God; therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings; for with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light." "My Lord and my God."

THE CROSS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

I.—CAIN AND ABEL.

IN the counsel of God, the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world, and from the day when Adam became alienated from the life of God by sin, the ever-advancing word of prophecy promised the Redeemer of man and the Conqueror of death. But not alone by the prophetic word

did God declare his gracious purposes ; his overruling wisdom ordained that events in the history of successive generations should abundantly foreshow the Saviour and his work ; events which, if not understood before He suffered, may now be pondered by the saved ones whom unto death He loved ; and which, while understood by the light reflected on them from the gospel narratives, are more minute than they, so that the light which the Gospels bestow upon the Old Testament Scriptures is amply given back by the deeper insight obtained through them into the mystery of the holy incarnation of our Lord. How much, for example, does the twenty-second Psalm reveal of the suffering heart of Christ upon the cross ; and what a tale of the Father's grief does natural affection read in Abraham's offering of Isaac on the mount.

The irreconcilable hatred of sin to holiness, the essential enmity of the darkness to the light, which led the princes of this world to crucify the Lord of Glory, were made manifest in the first pair of children born to man. It might be supposed that the worshipper who brought for his offering the fruits of the ground, decked and graced perhaps by the flowers of the field, was a man of gentler nature than he who with an apparent cruelty of disposition shed the blood of the innocent lamb. But no ; the pharisee and the publican, who went into the temple to pray, had their counterparts thus early in the history of man. It was Cain's way of declaring, "God, I thank thee that I am a righteous man." It was Abel's way of praying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." John's epistle remained to be indited thousands of years to come ; but it was already written, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God ; not on tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of Abel's heart, that, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Cain presented to God the fruits of the ground which He had cursed on account of his father's sin. Abel offered the lamb in his own stead, knowing, however imperfectly, that that poor lamb, while it represented himself the sinner, represented also a worthier Lamb, on whom, in the fulness of time, God would lay all his iniquities. To Adam and Eve the promise had been made that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head ; and, though very partially revealed as yet, Abel's offer-

ing showed his knowledge that redemption was to come by way of sacrifice.

Cain had not been, like Abel, convinced by the Holy Spirit of sin. God said, "If thou doest well shalt thou not have the excellency?" For, "them that honour me I will honour." "And if thou doest not well, sin (that is, a sin-offering) lieth at the door." Thou needest go no further than the door of thy tent to find a lamb for a sin-offering; and thy sin, thus acknowledged, with faith in the coming Lamb of God, shall be forgiven, and the right of the first-born shall be thine. But the god of this world had blinded the eyes of Cain, and his mortified pride could find no other vent than by taking his brother's life.

These first-born sons of humankind were representative men; they stood at the head of two lines of people, into which man in all ages has been divided. Again and again, as time advances, you meet with other pairs of men in whom the respective characteristics of these their prototypes re-appear, and in whom other principles, latent in them, are brought into action—Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Pharaoh and Moses, Saul and David, Ahab and Elijah, Sennacherib and Hezekiah, Sanballat and Nehemiah, Haman and Mordecai, and many more, until the Jews and Gentiles, with Pontius Pilate, were gathered together against the Lord and his Anointed, according to the second Psalm.

And still the same two antagonists live on—the flesh and the spirit. In the outward world he that is after the flesh still persecutes him that is after the spirit; for, "they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." And in the inward world of a believer's heart the principles of which Cain and Abel were the living manifestations maintain their war: the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, and the spiritual mind, which is life and peace. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

But there is this difference between the Cain-spirit in the outward and the inward worlds. In the latter it is kept in check, subdued, conquered; in the believer's heart gaining no pre-eminence; for, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law, but under grace." He sings the song of David,

"Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me. . . . The sons of the stranger shall submit themselves unto me ; as soon as they shall hear they shall be obedient unto me. Strangers shall fade away and be afraid out of their close places." "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." He takes the little foxes which spoil the vines, the Babylonish little ones, and dashes them against the Rock. He is more than conqueror through Him that loved him ; for neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, is able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But in the outward world the Cain-spirit gains an ever-increasing ascendancy. It advanced in an unbroken line of oppression, and fraud, and murder, until God swept away the world of the ungodly by the flood. It animated Jacob's ten sons against one ; Jesse's six sons against their shepherd brother. From Cain to the scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, whom the Lord denounced, it was one generation of whom the devil was the father ; as John says, "Cain was of that wicked one and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him ? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes ; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify ; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city ; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation."

But we purposed to consider the death of Abel as foreshowing the death of Christ. It was by his brother's hand that Abel fell ; and when God was manifested in our flesh, and became our brother, it was man, his brother, slew Him. And not only his brother in this wider sense, but the men of his own nation, and of his own tribe ; for, "He came unto his own and his own received him not." It was Israel, his brethren according to the flesh, and specially the tribe of Judah, who with inveterate hatred and

relentless cruelty cried, "Let him be crucified: his blood be on us and on our children." Other deeds in later times should show how Judah delivered Him to the Gentiles (as, for instance, the story of Joseph); but in Cain we see the bitter root of sin turning to wormwood every natural affection, and hardening man's heart to shed his brother's blood.

As soon as Cain's sin has brought forth death God makes inquisition for blood, "Where is Abel thy brother?" and Cain insolently replies, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" And God says, "What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." Henceforth, whithersoever as a fugitive and a vagabond he wandered, the voice of that blood cried from the ground beneath his feet, "Avenge me of my murderer." So ever ascends the voice of the souls of the slain ones under the altar, "How long, O Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" This is the solemn question which God is asking now of every unconverted man, "Where is Jesus, thy brother?" This, in effect, it was which moved the council at Jerusalem, with fear and rage, to say, "Did we not straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." God, by every preacher of the gospel, is repeating it; "Where is thy brother?" He is making inquisition for the blood of his Son; "He forgetteth not the cry of the humble." "For I lift up my hand to heaven and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword and mine hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood (and my sword shall devour flesh), with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy." But oh, wonder of wonders! Oh, mystery of love! Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! When Jehovah whet his glittering sword, it awaked against his Shepherd, and against the Man that is his Fellow. While the Man of God fell by the hand of men, it was no less by Jehovah's counsel; and therefore the blood of sprinkling, the precious blood of Christ which sprinkles the believer's heart from an evil conscience, speaks better things than that of Abel.

"Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers,
They strongly plead for me;
'Forgive him, oh, forgive,' they cry,
'Nor let that ransomed sinner die.'"

But there is a sevenfold curse in that shed blood against those who still, with Cain, reply, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" Art thou his keeper? Yes, sinner, indeed thou art. "God sent him to bless you, in turning every one of you from his iniquities;" sent Him, a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the glory of his people Israel. "But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of Life;" for, of a truth, my God, "against thy Holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together." Yes, sons of Cain, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers."

Ah, "Where is thy brother?" Is He on the cross where ye nailed Him? Is He in the grave, where loving hands carried Him, but whither your malicious fear followed Him, sealing the stone and setting a watch? Be horribly afraid, thou son of Cain. He is not here; He is risen. See, and tremble as ye see, the place where the Lord lay. God raised Him from the dead; having loosed the pains of death, for it was not possible that He should be holden of it. Where is thy Brother, son of Cain? The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob hath glorified his Son Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand. For what purpose? To cast thee forth upon the open field; to cause all the fowls of the heaven to remain upon thee; to fill the beasts of the whole earth with thee? No, sinner; no. All these curses, ay, a more realizing sense of curse than all thy race is capable of, though the time of their tor-

ment were infinitely lengthened out, fell upon thy Maker's heart for thee; and He is now exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to his murderers, and forgiveness of sins.

He was maliciously put to death like Abel, yet, in his dying, He was suffering Cain's punishment. "All the righteous blood shed upon the earth" was then required at his hands. He bore the curse of Cain, and of that long generation of whom Cain was the head, and of which every sinner is a member; and having been subject to death, the monster of the dark deep was obliged to vomit Him up on the dry land; for it was not possible that He should be holden of it. Death could not retain the uncorruptible God.

Said Cain, "From thy face shall I be hid." Ah, that is the crowning curse; but the Saviour endured it when He said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" For thee, my soul, that fearful cry was wrung from the broken heart of the incarnate God! For thee the blackness and darkness of the Father's averted face fell upon the soul of the beloved Son. Cain knew that to be hid from the face of God was the acme of all curse, just as to dwell in his presence is the height of blessing; "In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." So Abraham prayed, "Oh that Ishmael might live *before thee*." But notwithstanding his complaint, "From thy face shall I be hid," see how the curse takes effect upon Cain. God *drove* his parents out of Paradise; but Cain *went* out from the presence of the Lord. Oh, the most terrible quality of sin is, that it makes the sinner a *willing* wanderer from the God of his life.

Cain feared that every one should slay him. But a time will come when men shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them; a dreadful day in which they shall cry in vain to the rocks to fall on them, and the hills to cover them, from the wrath of God and the Lamb. The sinner has no such immortality as the believer has by union with the living God; but a mark shall be set upon the lost, so that ever dying they shall never die; for the smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever. No wonder Cain built a city, seeking respite amongst the crowd from his conscience, which ever echoed the cry of his brother's blood. But he was a fugitive and a vagabond still; he was wandering from God; and in the city or the field, the curse was on him. And yet, while life

lasted, was not the voice of mercy saying to him still, "A sin-offering lieth at the door"? So, while the house of Israel wanders as a fugitive and vagabond upon the face of the earth because they crucified their Lord, the voice of mercy still pursues them with its unwearied cry, "Turn again, thou backsliding Israel." So, to every human creature the same voice, with loving entreaty, continually pleads, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

Let us conclude these too desultory remarks by recapitulating the thoughts which are intended to be most conspicuous in this paper: thoughts concerning the cross. If we have correctly interpreted the mind of the Spirit, we have seen in Abel Him who, by wicked hands, was crucified and slain; but that while the blood of Abel cried from the ground to God, the Judge of all, for vengeance, the blood of Jesus cries for mercy and forgiveness. And why this difference? Because He was not, like Abel, the mere victim of the wicked malice of his brother; but the atoning sacrifice for sin; because, in the mystery of his wisdom, God ordained that the very stroke which filled up the measure of man's iniquity should effect his deliverance. It was as if Abel, in dying, had been the sacrifice for Cain's sin; as if the blood of righteous Abel, whom Cain slew, had washed away Cain's curse; as though Abel had died by Cain's hand, instead of Cain. Oh, verily, God is love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. He makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of his wrath will He restrain. Had not the god of this world blinded the eyes of them that believe not, they would perceive that the very statement that God was manifested in the likeness of sinful flesh, and tasted death for every man, contains in itself the proof of its truth. For none but God could have devised such a remedy, God affirms that it has taken place, and God cannot lie. M.

ALWAYS TRIUMPHING IN CHRIST JESUS.

THE thought has been much impressed upon my mind of late, that professors of Christianity are generally satisfied with the knowledge that we are "reconciled to God by the death of his Son," without entering into the blessed apprehension that "being reconciled we shall be saved by his

life" (Rom. v. 10). For lack of this apprehension the continual salvation here set forth is unsought, and consequently unenjoyed.

Now, what is this continuous salvation? Is it not a detailed deliverance from every snare of Satan through power of resistance given moment by moment, and constantly sustained by faith in the promise, "Draw nigh unto God, and He will draw nigh unto you" (James iv. 8). Surely, this is the great secret of holiness in the detail, this power of watching and praying always, which is our Lord's command (Luke xxi. 36), therefore we know it to be practicable. Will it be said that this would throw us back upon legality? Will the old cry of worldly professors be raised against bondage? Oh, blessed bondage, that should deliver us from falling under the power of sin in our nature, of Satan, and of the world that lieth in the wicked one, by binding us irrevocably, inseparably, to our beloved Lord!

A person who knows his completeness in Christ, by faith, knows not only that his old nature has been crucified and buried with Christ, but that the new man is so indissolubly one with Christ risen, that whatever the Christian, when in the Spirit, thinks, speaks, and acts, are the thoughts, words, and acts of Christ; for "both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one;" and it is our blessed privilege not only to put on Christ, but to abide in Him. Thus, unless some evil principle be suffered to intervene between Christ and the soul, crushing the blessed movements of the new creature, that exact transcript of Christ, our every moment will be spent in righteousness and true holiness; for in these our new nature is declared to be created after, or according to, God (Eph. iv. 24). We all know, alas! too experimentally, that this intervening principle is our old Adamic nature excited by Satan and the world. But, I repeat, our Lord has said, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. xxvi. 41), whereby we see that we are not left under the power of these Satanic incursions without sufficient panoply; for it is more than implied in those blessed words of gentle reproof of Christ to his sleeping disciples, that had they been sufficiently loyal to dread their entrance into temptation, they might have avoided doing so by watchfulness and prayer. It is surely a great dishonour done to God if we dare to suppose that He ever commands impossibilities; therefore we are bound to believe that power of constant watch-

fulness and prayer is laid up for us in the unsearchable riches of Christ, and is comprised in that salvation from evil which is secured to us by his life at the right hand of God.

Nor is Christ seated there alone, for all his members are even now spiritually there in Him; for, having quickened us together with Christ, God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Him (Eph. ii. 5, 6). Surely it is there, in the sacred enjoyment of this life in Him, within the veil, that we learn the blessed power of watching and praying concerning the things down here, bringing into the most ordinary and detailed duties of our daily path that exquisite sense of oneness with the risen Jesus, the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of which we have learned within the veil before the throne of God, where we are declared to be not only redeemed, but made kings and priests.

How beautifully are we taught in the word the combined blessing of our heavenly and earthly union in and with Jesus; *in* Him at the right hand of God, from whence we have permanent salvation through his life, while, at the same time, He tenderly vouchsafes the assurance that He is *with* us always, to the end of the age (Matt. xxviii. 20). Is it not, then, continually made evident in Scripture that this is indeed "God's will, even our sanctification;" that this constant vigilance, this uninterrupted communion with Jesus, necessarily flows from a clear sense of our completeness in Christ—our indissoluble union with Him; and are declared to be effectual for the resistance of Satan, the world, and our own evil nature (James ii. 7; 1 John iv. 4; v. 4). Are we not then guilty of positive unbelief if we turn despairingly away from the command, "Be ye holy, for I am holy"? I speak of no human pretension to holiness, but of Christ's holiness, not imparted, but ours by virtue of irrevocable union with Him; for being joined to the Lord we are one spirit. Let me dwell for a few moments on the soul-cheering promise I have quoted, "Lo, I am with you always." Did we enter, even in a degree, into the perfect safety, the untroubled calm, of being always in the manifested presence of Jesus; the God-man communicating to us, through the Spirit, his own ineffable thoughts on every subject brought before us; his infinite wisdom and perfect will; could we ever again fall into listless indifference as to whether we

recognize his presence or not? Could we suffer our communion with Him to be interrupted, even for the briefest period, by Satan's lures and the world's baits?

All Christians understand what it is occasionally to know that Jesus is with them, of a truth, as their dear familiar Friend; but how few believe that to be abidingly in the enjoyment of this happiness is their purchased (but, alas! how often unclaimed) possession; not by self-effort, but by faith in the repeated declarations of God, that Christ and his church are one; yea, that we are members of his body—of his flesh and of his bones.

It is written (Mark xi. 24) "Whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Strange that some dear bright Christians can credit this *carte blanche* from their God concerning everything but that best of all blessings, next to our being reconciled to God by the death of his Son, even the blessing of being saved, continually saved, by his life. I am sure that you Christians who will begin to claim the promise I have just quoted, for the inconceivable happiness of constant communion with Christ, will no longer have to deplore that Satan, the world, and the flesh, have, at times, more power over you, than the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. You will no longer find that sin has dominion over you; for is it not definitely promised that this shall not be the case?

If it be supposed that it is only in age and seclusion that we can be always in the Spirit, that would be to argue the possibility of holiness in the flesh, a most God-dishonouring lie; for the moment faith is given us to believe that we are not only justified by Christ's death, but saved by his life, that moment power is given to triumph always in Christ Jesus, to be always in the Spirit, in one word, never to lose our sense of identity with Jesus. H. P.

THE LATE PRINCE CONSORT.

THE nation deplores the loss which, in the providence of God, has befallen it, and truly sympathizes with the beloved Sovereign Lady and her children, who have been so suddenly bereaved. With no simulated sorrow have the people mourned; with no fulsome flattery have they eulogized

the departed Prince. But while we are partakers of the universal sorrow, it will be well that we learn the lessons that our God is teaching in it. And the quotation from the leading daily journal of some remarks in which we must all accord, affords us the opportunity to observe how the morality of the Bible is that alone by which men can live happily together, even in this present world; and how the teaching of the Lord Jesus is at times endorsed by those who are not his avowed disciples. The *Times* says :

We cannot tell yet how much we have lost. The PRINCE CONSORT was the natural bond and unity of the Royal House. . . Union is now the watchword of the nation, and no where is it so necessary as in its very head and focus. The way to preserve that union is that which the PRINCE CONSORT himself has marked out. It is modesty, humility, and reserve. It is to assume no greatness, to submit to all honourable conditions, to find the course of duty, to do the best within it, and to respect the Constitution, even when oneself may be its principal victim. In this way the loftiest personages, with the most commanding talents and the most ardent ambition, may learn at once to obey and overcome. They may be humble and sacrifice themselves, and yet be more than conquerors. They may resign, and yet gain. They may lose self-consequence, cherished rights, and dear privileges, and yet win all hearts and possess the world. This hard and self-denying path is the example which the PRINCE CONSORT has bequeathed to the nation, and first of all to the family that has most reason to lament him.

It was the Lord of glory who, first by example, and then by precept, taught that service is the path to rule; and showed us how, by self-sacrifice, to be more than conquerors. It is, indeed, an honour to the memory of Prince Albert, and a blessing to ourselves, that his life should afford any illustration of these blessed lessons. The *Times* goes on to say :

No retrospect of the PRINCE CONSORT's life and character would be complete without some notice of a point of cardinal importance in all estimates of Royalty. Till the present reign the principal vice of British Sovereigns and Princes, as, indeed, of most Princes, has been thriftless management and reckless expenditure. Prince ALBERT had the full benefit of the national repentance on this point. The wisdom which Parliament had learnt by experience was shown to him in good time, and prudent care was taken that neither for good nor for evil should he have much encouragement to excess. It was hinted, indeed, that, should he prove trustworthy, the generous public would increase his allowance. Such was the premium offered to a moderation and virtue which, even with this inducement, were thought almost impossible in a Prince. At the same time, all the constitutional learning of the country was directed to discover what a Prince Consort was not, and when, for this purpose, the legal relations of husband and wife had been carefully transposed, the problem was satisfactorily solved. The practical reply, for there was none other, to this unseasonable outbreak of jealousy and prejudice was the noblest ever given. During a period of unparalleled private and public expenditure, when speculation has taken new wings, when luxury has run a race with pride, and the national Exchequer has been stormed and carried a dozen

times for unheard-of requirements, the Royal Family has set a unique example of cheerful and dignified economy. When there came the cry of famine and pestilence, and then war, they freely paid their share of the public contributions. They have discharged the debts and obligations of several Royal personages both here and abroad. Nor have they neglected the future wants of their family. Thus have they passed for rich on an income which would have been penury by the GEORGIAN standard. Domestic happiness and the sense of duty have been their cheap luxuries. Compared with the reckless waste and the heartless misery of a former reign, it may, indeed, be said of this, "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."

These are truly valuable sentences. Nowadays *frugality* and *contentment* are old-fashioned, almost obsolete words. The children seek to begin where the parents left off. To "be content with such things as ye have;" to "mind not high things, but be contented with mean things," are maxims greatly in disrepute in the present day. But the Way of Holiness, the King's Highway, has to do with such mean things as these. If what the oracle of public opinion declares be true, that "speculation has taken new wings," and "luxury has run a race with pride," at least let those who profess to follow the Lowly One not be hurried down the stream. "Godliness, with contentment, is great gain." In living, in dress, in everything, let not the labour of our hands be laboriously spent upon ourselves, lest, after all, we should not "have to give to him that needeth." Yet remember, that only by the cross of the Son of God can the world be crucified to us and we to it.

The *Times* concludes with a panegyric in which it is quite forgotten that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. We know little of the Prince's inner life; but we trust he had built upon a more sure foundation than his "noble and blameless career." Fain would we believe that his natural "simplicity and straightforwardness" were sanctified by the word of God and prayer, and the iniquity of his holy things atoned for by the blood of Christ. We cannot penetrate the veil which hides from us the dead; we would not if we could. But let love, not duty, be our guiding-star; and while we find "a heavenly ordinance in earthly rules," for the Master's service in the little things of every day, let the love of Christ constrain us thus to judge, that if One died for all, all died in Him; and that He died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves; but unto Him who died for them, and rose again.

SANCTIFICATION BY FAITH.—II.

BY THE REV. S. GARRATT.

IN the last number we examined what sanctification is; “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,” or fidelity, “meekness, temperance;” in other words, the development of the seed sown in regeneration; and we are now to consider how it is that we are sanctified by faith.

But before so doing, there is a point of great importance on which it will be well to touch.

The seed sown in regeneration is the direct result of Divine power. It is called “a new creature,” that is, a new creation, and, like every other work of God, is absolutely perfect. Therefore John says of this new creation,—or “new man,” as Paul calls it, or “hidden man of the heart,” as Peter calls it,—that “whosoever is born of God sinneth not, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.” “Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world.” “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not.” The light which is let into the soul in its new birth is capable of enlargement from a spark into a flame, but not of being made more perfect. The new man has all his parts and organs, and needs nothing but growth. Instead of the improvement of that which man has naturally, there is the creation of that within him which God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, can pronounce very good.

But there does still remain in those who are regenerate, who have this perfect seed of the Divine life within them, that old and fleshly nature, which they derived from Adam. It not only remains, but is not in any way improved. “The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” When it comes into contact with the mind of the Spirit, the new creation within, the necessary result is conflict. The two cannot mix. They keep each other in check. But neither can nature spoil grace, nor grace mend nature.

Sanctification is the growth of the new man in spite of the opposition of the old. It is, therefore, cradled in conflict, and

does not cease fighting till, with our mortal body, the body of sin also, our corrupt nature, is dropped. And herein lies the mystery of the life of faith, which very young Christians sometimes find it so difficult to understand, how it is possible for a believer to say, as Paul says, in the same breath, "I am carnal, sold under sin," and "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Both were true at the same moment. Paul looked at his sinful self, the mind of the flesh which he had derived from Adam, and said, "I am carnal, sold under sin." He looked at himself, as a new creature in Christ Jesus, and was able to say, "I myself with the mind serve the law of God." "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

But we must not forget that this new life imparted to the believer is not so imparted as to be possessed separately from Christ. It really exists in the believer's heart; it is not like his righteousness of justification, reckoned to be his, without his having any actual participation in it, except in the eye of God; but is a real thing in his own soul. Yet it is not there like a candle burning independently; but, like a sunbeam, dependent from moment to moment on the sun. We derive our holiness from Christ, and its growth depends upon communion with Him. And this leads us at once into the point we have now to examine, how faith is connected with our sanctification.

"We have access," Paul says, "by faith into this grace wherein we stand." He could hardly have said a thing more alien to all men's natural thoughts, and more absolutely incomprehensible to many. For how do most men think about this matter? They fully admit the necessity of holiness, however much they may dislike it; but they look upon it as a state to be reached by mere effort. Anybody striving earnestly they count sure of attaining to it. And if, instead of disliking it, they are really desirous of being made holy themselves, and seeing others made holy, they say, "Strive, strive; strive—run, run, run—fight, fight, fight—labour, labour, labour." And when they have so done, think they have done something, when they have not spoken a word which can teach the man how to strive lawfully—how so to run as to receive the prize—how to fight, not as one that beateth the air—how to labour, not as a starved and dying man, who cannot lift his hand to his head, but as a strong and well-fed husbandman, who eats the fruit of the ground

before working on it. "Access" there must be to holiness; it is not a matter of course to be able to serve God. Even in earthly matters it is not uncommon to see the most strenuous energy thrown away, because not directed aright. What can be more laudable than a man doing his best to serve his country in case of invasion from a foreign foe? But how diligently has it been instilled into the minds of our young men, that if they wish to do so in the hour of danger, they must get admitted into a volunteer corps, and go through a regular training, or they will be worse than useless, able to do nothing but run away, or perhaps be hung by military law for fighting without being soldiers. The man out of uniform and the man in uniform may be equally strong, equally brave, equally resolute; but the one will be treated as a felon and do no good, the other may with honour to himself serve his country. The only difference between them being, that the one has access into the ranks, has gone through the right gate. Even so there is no true fighting against sin, unless the man goes about it in the right way. No mere effort, no amount of earnestness, will make the man holy who has not access into this grace.

This access is through Christ. Christ is the door to every blessing, the way into the church, the way to the Father, the way into heaven, and also the way into holiness. This is the reason why He is called our Sanctification, because it is only through Him that we can attain to holiness. Never must we think, that when justified by Christ's blood we have received from Christ in that gift all He has to bestow. We have access through Him, also, into that which is the longing desire of each believer's heart—inward grace. Indeed, passing through one door involves passing through the other. If Christ justifies us by his righteousness, He is sure also to sanctify us by his Spirit. It is He who is the door to both blessings, and when He gives access or entrance into the one, He does also into the other. There is no other way to holiness, except through Christ. So entirely hopeless is the attempt of those who think of coming to Christ through holiness. It is through Christ we come to holiness: partly because He has obtained the Spirit for us; partly because it is only to those who are not under the law but under grace, that victory over sin is promised; partly because the main means of becoming like Christ are, beholding Christ's glory,

and communion with Christ Himself. And, therefore, so long as there is no relation established between Christ and the soul, so long as the soul is not united to Christ, has not found Christ to be indeed the way, it has not even entered upon the path of holiness, has not taken one step upon it, or begun to stand in grace.

No man can tell how important it is to make this point clear. Everything depends upon it, for it is possible, even for God's children to waste their efforts after holiness, by forgetting the dependence of the whole thing upon Christ. Many make laborious attempts at promoting holiness in themselves or in others which have no such result. It is not the temptation of the day to lacerate the body, or mortify it by absurd severities; but there are other ways in which persons try to do the same thing—they use lawful means without respect to Him through whom alone those means can prove effectual. They pray, without first obtaining access by Christ to the throne of grace. They read their Bibles without seeing in them "Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." They make vows of amendment, instead of drawing strength from Christ Himself. Is it any wonder that such fight uncertainly, run but get no nearer to the goal, labour like those who put sand into a bag with holes? We must by Christ have access into holiness; and those who pass Him by, and try to reach the same end by some other way, will find themselves disappointed at the last. And how does this endear the Saviour to his people, that by Him they can obtain that which they so much desire. What longings does this stir up in many a heart after resemblance to Him. How precious is the thought of holiness to him who has caught a glimpse of what it is, and hopes to reflect it. And to this, as well as to the blessings of pardon and justification, Christ is the way. It is by Him we have access to it. Out of Him, severed from Him, as He himself says, we can do nothing. But, in Him, with Him, by Him, we can do all things.

It is by faith we enter at this door. This was one of the lessons the apostles had to learn with so much difficulty. But they did learn that God purifies the heart by faith. The fact that it is by faith the soul is united to Christ may make us partly understand this. Union with Christ has two aspects. It looks

God-ward: God sees the believer in Christ, and *can* see no sin in Him. And it looks Christ-ward—Christ *will* see no sin in his mystical body—will have no spot in his bride. And, because his people are united to Him, He will purify them. "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water, by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." And that which unites the soul to Christ is faith. That which in another sphere justifies is also the instrument by which He sanctifies. All the holy actions detailed in Heb. xi. were done by faith. Enoch walking with God—Abraham leaving his father's house at God's command—the endurance of martyrdom, and torture worse than death, by feeble women, are there ascribed to faith. They drew their strength for these efforts by faith. And it is so still. Still it is only by faith in Jesus, that anything can be done which is really pleasing to God. The soul believing in Jesus has in Him the strength which is needed. When Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," he shows the secret of the believer's holiness. His power consists in casting himself in conscious weakness upon Him. Oh! what might there is in that helplessness, which compels a man to depend entirely on Jesus. Perhaps a young Christian finds himself engaged in some conflict with his own corrupt heart. He struggles long and violently, but is as often overcome. One look to Jesus for strength is worth all the efforts he can make in his own power. Strength comes in simple dependence. When he turns away from all his own fancied power, and gets his power altogether from the Saviour, then he has the victory.

Faith grasps the promises by which God works. These are God's instruments in sanctifying souls. "Whereby," it is said, "are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." And it is only by faith that these promises can have any effect. The believed promise is full of sanctifying power. When you take some promise as yours, that promise works in your heart. Did we more simply rest upon the promises, we should stand up more firmly; did we let them dwell more richly in our heart, we should find in them food making our souls grow. We must use the means of

God's own appointment, if we would advance. Clinging to a promise, some word which God has spoken, is much more effectual in resisting temptation, or gaining an increase of grace, than the strongest efforts in our own power; and in this sense it is by faith we have access into this grace in which we stand.

Faith keeps up the intercourse between God and the soul. It is like a hand drawing grace from Him in every time of need. And we are sanctified by faith, when stretching out this hand constantly to receive the power we need to do his will. That which we might labour in vain to do by any efforts of our own, may be done at once when we draw the strength out of infinite fulness. Then we link ourselves with Him who cannot disappoint us, and who is able to work all our works in us. I might toil in vain to lift a weight myself, which would be moved in an instant if I fastened it to a steam-engine. And in this case we are permitted by faith to join ourselves to infinite power. How long and weary was that night in which the disciples toiled in fishing and took nothing; but when they trusted in Jesus, then the labour was at an end. They gained more in five minutes, than in five hours previously. It was so when they were rowing in a stormy sea, and tossed about for hours; but when He came walking on the waves, and they committed themselves to Him, immediately the ship was at the land whither they went. Dependence upon Jesus brings with it strength. By this God purifies hearts. He communicates to them by it a strength which is not their own. And so it is often found, that while some whom we think to be full of power prove weaker than water, there is many a despised Christian, having no inward consciousness of strength, who yet is really strong. The fruits of holiness flourish in the heart. Things are done by that man, or that feeble woman it may be, which put to shame the efforts of other Christians; and the reason is this, that there is one who is strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and thus, by faith, has access into this grace—is sanctified by faith.

Lastly.—This sanctification of faith is full of rejoicing hope.—“Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God,” is a part of it. See how it differs from man's own method of making himself holy, which has always an air of melancholy about it. Man's method denounces sin and threatens it; God's method shows how to triumph over it.

Man's method throws doubt upon the sinner's justification, in order to lead him the more strenuously to seek to be sanctified; God's method draws from his being completely justified, the pledge and assurance of his sanctification also. Man's method bids the believer question his safety, that he may be driven by fear to do right; God's method teaches him that in order to do right he must, above all things, never cast away his confidence. Man's method makes mortified men; God's method makes happy men, who "mortify the flesh with its affections and lusts." Man's method empties the heart of one unclean spirit, and sweeps and garnishes it for seven more; God's method fills the heart with grace, that grace may expel its sin and reign. Man's method at best makes a hard-working bondslave; God's method trains up children. Man's method coerces into unwilling obedience; God's method educates into willing surrender. Man's method leaves the soul in hopeless uncertainty; God's method makes it rejoice in hope of his glory. And while some are striving in the dark to mend their corrupt hearts, and patch up their broken resolutions, and work themselves into something better; those whom God is teaching, being first "justified by faith," and "having peace with him through our Lord Jesus Christ," by that same Saviour have access also unto holiness, by faith receiving the first seed of new life, and daily supplies of grace, and "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God."

To one already justified it is the most important of all questions how to become holy. It is with this end in view that we have been saved. It was that He might deliver us from this present evil world that He gave Himself for our sins; and the substance of what has preceded is this, that the blessing is not to be obtained in unbelieving effort and self-trusting resolutions; that it is equally, though for different reasons, true that we cannot be our own sanctifiers, any more than our own justifiers; and that coming in faith to Jesus is the way to find grace and strength as really as pardon and righteousness. We must draw our strength from Jesus. On Him alone can we depend for it. And he is most in the way to grow in holiness who is most conscious of being able to do nothing without Jesus.

Trust Him, dear brother, or dear sister, with this matter. Cling to his promise, "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." And when you find the

force of corruption within threatening to overwhelm you, instead of resting on your own power or yielding to despair, throw yourself, by faith, on Him to whom you owe it that you are not under condemnation. From the hour that He set you free from guilt He gave you warrant to trust Him for deliverance from iniquity. His you are, and He will make you what his must be. The sanctifying Spirit He never withholds from the justified believer. Faith cannot stretch out the empty hand and draw it back unfilled. You shall by faith climb mountains of difficulty, tread Satan under foot, overcome the world, and be more than conqueror, till, at last, the God of peace shall "sanctify you wholly, and preserve your whole body, soul, and spirit blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"CHRIST CRUCIFIED."

THE apostle says (1 Cor. i. 23), "*We preach Christ crucified.*" This is, of necessity, the great fundamental theme, which the gospel of God's grace proclaims. God calls men to fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ (1 Cor. i. 9). This involves privilege indeed, and that unspeakably great; but it involves trial also. In reality, it is discipleship; it is companionship with Christ through this present evil world, in conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil; it involves a combat; it is the fight of faith: the lustings of the flesh have to be overcome, that in newness of life we may walk before God. Amongst mankind in general there are, of course, tastes, and convictions, and aims, diametrically opposed to what the preaching of the cross implies. But, in the Christian, too, there is the carnal mind; in him, the flesh lusts against the Spirit; hence the combat, which fellowship with Jesus Christ involves. Thus, as the apostle testifies in the opening of the epistle, from which we have quoted above, whether in the church or out of it, however men's tastes may be shocked, however their natural desires may be opposed, Christ crucified is preached, at once "the power of God and the wisdom of God." Surely then, the recent convert, or the youthful disciple, needs to draw instruction from the cross. Christ crucified, is for him the

befitting, the necessary theme. Let the apostle's testimony have our brief consideration.

"*For the Jews require a sign.*" This is the reason assigned by the apostle for preaching Christ crucified. To them that perish, indeed, such preaching is foolishness; but to them who are saved, it is the power of God. "For the Jews require a sign." It is what they ask for. Shall they have it? Yes, if they will receive it as God gives it, in the cross; otherwise the sign, Christ crucified, is foolishness to them. A sign is some outward manifestation of God's presence and power. It is power shown forth, indicating that God is with us, and for us. Moses had given such a sign, when the manna fell on the camp of Israel. The supply thus daily and miraculously furnished, said plainly on God's part, "I am with this people to guide, protect, and bless them." It was power, divine power, visibly displayed; power which was to uphold and sustain the people, till the wilderness should be left behind. Is a religion, then, propounded to us, by which we are to be saved? or have we accepted, as true, a faith by which we are to stand, till heaven and glory be attained? Surely it seems not unreasonable to ask for some real, substantial display of power—power that can be recognized and felt, that thus the soul may rest secure. In reality, the Jews nationally but represent to us a characteristic of our common nature. It is a feeling which ever asks for something outward, that shall appeal to the external senses; it brooks not the idea, that listening to the still small voice within, we should be content in self-abasement to learn God's will. Then and thus, indeed, ultimately the sign will be seen, and the power will be made manifest. But the sign and the power are not thus after the desired form. In the churches of Christ there are many who, Jew-like, require and run after signs. They seek for this and that, *without* and *not within*. They rest in outward forms, outward ordinances, outward means, though still admitting that Jesus is the only Saviour. Christ really manifests Himself *within*, as the power of an endless life. And so to the seekers of signs, whether in the churches or out of them, the apostle preaches Christ crucified.

"*The Greeks seek after wisdom.*" Is this an aspiration that may seem to clash with the fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ? Surely to desire wisdom is in itself good; to attain it, is

man's legitimate aim. Folly is the fruit of sin, the sad inheritance of the fall. Men have become fools through sin. And yet, to some extent, we possess the desire to become wise; it is an instinct in all, with some it is a passion. Is it wrong? Does the gospel forbid it? Nay, does not God Himself testify, that "wisdom is better than rubies"? And, says the divinely inspired proverb, "with all thy gettings, get wisdom." Assuredly, God's thought about us is, that we should become wise. His gift in Christ is wisdom; and yet, to the Greeks, who represent to us man's innate cravings to become wise, the preaching of the cross is foolishness. To true wisdom, and to its attainment, the gospel cannot possibly be opposed; but there is a wisdom which brooks not fellowship with the meek and lowly Jesus, which admits not that reason is depraved, and that the true source of intelligence in man, is that *light of life* which constitutes his regeneration in God. There is a wisdom which ministers not to the true discipline of the soul, and which tends not to bring it into devout and hallowed communion with God, who is the fountain of all true wisdom; it is, in short, a wisdom which may be in itself "earthly, sensual, and devilish," as it leaves man's moral and spiritual nature unchanged. It fails, therefore, in all the essentials of true wisdom. It leaves man destitute of the knowledge of God; and, while it scans his works, it leaves the soul estranged from Him. The Greek, therefore, as the proud aspirant after a wisdom which ranks him only with the disputer of this world, is no proper type of the youthful disciple of Christ; to him the wisdom of God is foolishness. And to the Greek, as well as to the Jew, whether in the church or out of it, the apostle preaches Christ crucified. How then does this preaching affect the churches of Christ, and what has the youthful disciple to learn from it?

"*We preach Christ crucified.*" In the sufferings and agonies associated with the crucifixion of our Lord on Calvary, the wisdom of this world finds ample scope to dilate. Eloquence and oratory here expend themselves, as on their favourite theme. To the sympathies, to the tenderest affections, to the most excited passions, the appeal is made. It is, indeed, a theme fraught with wonders. Oh, how it serves to set forth love, at once unutterable and divine. But preaching this and thus only, is not to preach the

cross. Christ crucified, is Christ as having passed away from the elements of this world. If I am called, as a believer, to the fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is to the fellowship of Christ as crucified. Thus associated with him, it may now be asked, where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Where indeed! they have no place in the church of God, they stand associated with "the rulers of this world," who have crucified the Lord of glory; they have no part in Christ. To all that this world boasts of, and to all that characterizes the spirit of this world, Christ is crucified. Christ in me, is Christ crucified to the flesh and the world. This must be seen and realized if we would say with the apostle, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." It is not then to the unbelieving portion of mankind merely, whether Jew or Greek, that the teaching of the cross has to be addressed. Even the disciple of Jesus has to learn, in the deep experience of his soul, that it comprehends within it, what is to him the vital, the essential, the fundamental element in the gospel. It is thus he has to learn, that the carnal mind, wherever and to whatever extent it exists, is enmity against God. Its loftier aspirations, as well as its more grovelling tastes and passions, must yield to the power of the cross. The way of holiness, as thus contemplated, may extort the cry, "How narrow is the path that leads to life!" And yet, love invites to it; Jesus Himself points to it, when He says, "I am the way." It is the path of peace and life; power and truth are found there. True, the sign-seeking Jew is confounded when the cross is preached; it is as if a stumbling-block were cast before him. The wisdom-loving Greek is shocked and appalled; it is as if the profoundest folly were announced to him. Nevertheless, they who are called unto the fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ, have fully and sweetly to learn, how "it has pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." They find in God's own way, both what the Jew requires, and what the Greek seeks. They find the sign and the wisdom too, and that both are of God. The sign is apparent—the power of God is manifested; the wisdom is divine—it is the wisdom of God. So, adds the apostle, we preach,

"*Christ the power of God.*" It is power seen, and felt, and acknowledged; power working salvation within. This is a sign, a heavenly sign, a sign from above. Surely that sign is not wanting when, in a soul once benighted, the light of the kingdom of God is enkindled: when ambition, pride, envy, the lust of power or wealth, yield to meekness, gentleness, purity and love; when iniquity and vice give place indeed, and that in the inner workings of the soul, to affections and aims that are heavenly and pure. This is truly to be illumined, ennobled, and blessed. Here is a sign indeed. It is the putting forth of power, and of power divine.

"*And the wisdom of God.*" For it is true that to them who of God are in Christ Jesus, He of God is made wisdom, as well as righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. This is a truth to be experimentally verified. As colours are incomprehensible to him who as to this world is born blind, so true wisdom is undiscovered by him who, stumbling at the cross, attains not to the true interior spiritual vision. If, with the apostle, "I am crucified with Christ, I nevertheless live; and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." He is then my life, and the life is the light of men, and Christ is indeed to me the wisdom of God. Thenceforth, according to circumstances, created things, God's handiworks around me, may more or less directly impart instruction to my soul. The lily in its beauty, the fowls of the air in their varied habits, may occupy my thoughts, and with profit too (see Matt. vi. 26, 28). Both in the sciences and in the arts I may find free scope for the exercising of my powers. For to know science aright is to know God. But the wisdom which I seek after is that which tends ever to sanctify and ennoble the entire man. In this respect, the babe in Christ is far in advance of the wise and prudent of this world. But now, indeed, "we all see through a glass, darkly; now we know in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away; then shall we know even as we are known." May they who read these pages, and who have recently been called by grace, search earnestly into the mysteries of the cross. Then they will learn fully, that the one thing which man wants, is the knowledge of Christ crucified; and they will learn for themselves, also, that the apostle said not in vain, "We preach Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

WM. HUGILL.

"ABIDE IN ME."

IS it not true that the church, while speaking sometimes of sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, seems blind to the fact that it is her Lord's will she should *abide* there? She repeats Lady Powerscourt's words, that "The Christian should look down from heaven to earth, not up from earth to heaven;" yet she seems satisfied to be only occasionally in the heavenlies, contented to go thither now and then for the purpose of claiming a settlement as it were, or of keeping term, but feeling the region too pure and clear for her to remain there. Want of faith in the transcendent beauty, excellence, and love of Jesus, gives Satan power to tempt her to earth in the supposition that her Lord is insufficient to fill her with happiness. And thus she leaves Him for the purpose of warming herself at earth's false fires. She may possibly imagine she does this only to fulfil relative duties there, or to bring messages of mercy; but were these her true aims she would not have to quit her Lord for their fulfilment, for He has promised to be with her always even to the end of the age. Thus it is most evident that if she thinks herself apart from Christ, it is because she depreciates the inestimable value of communion with Him, or else she would not forget the claim she has as a believer, of "abiding" in Him, and his promise of "abiding" in her. No one can more fully recognize than I do that we are "complete in Christ;" that the moment we believe, "we are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 39); and that there is no condemnation for them who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. viii.). We are sanctified by faith that is in Jesus; we are washed, and our Lord Himself tells us, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet" (John xiii. 10); and this constant cleansing of our walk we receive by the presence of the High Priest within the veil for us; for "if any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iii. 1, 2). Without exercising this blessed power given us of watching and praying always, we shall certainly find we cannot go on our way rejoicing; nor shall we have untroubled peace; nor can we always, at home and abroad, stand before the church and the world as the

epistle of Christ, known and read of all, fulfilling our mission given us by Him who declares He has sent us into the world as the Father sent Him into the world. On the contrary, disgrace will be brought on that holy Name by which we are called.

Thus, to take a feminine instance (being more within my own sphere), a wife, a mother, and the mistress of a family, in explaining the morning portion of Scripture to the domestic circle, clearly and faithfully declares the Christian's high calling of God in Christ Jesus. But what an opening is too frequently made for the scoffs of some unbeliever present, by the walk of this expositor through the day, from her failure of realized union with her Lord. Children behold, perhaps, an example of caprice and irritability; servants suffer through a haughty, impatient, exacting temper; surrounding poor eye with embittered feelings this Christian, weighed down with sumptuous clothing and ornaments, the cost of which they think might have ministered to their necessities; and some converted sinner is sorely tempted to exclaim, "There walks a Christian of some years' standing, decorated with the very same fashions which grateful love to my adored Lord has led me to loathe as garments spotted by the flesh." I am supposing this person to have been saved by having escaped to the City of Refuge, but to consider herself necessarily sometimes carnal. We may say that "she is reconciled to God by the death of his Son;" but there we must stop; for certainly it could not be added that she is "saved by his life." And, as I have already said, instead of speaking of such an one as sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, one might almost describe her as darting thither at morn and evening orisons, and Scripture-reading meetings, but coming down, for business transactions, with Satan and the world, in her old Adam garb, all the rest of the day. I own I am drawing a strong picture; but, I may ask, is it always a caricature? I trow not. But there are great numbers of even dear Christians who tell us that when they enter into close contact with the things of this life in their daily walk, they become so absorbed by them that they quickly lose the sweet manifestation of Jesus' presence and identity, and, of course, they are shorn of their strength and become as another man. These dear ones do indeed feel that life is a conflict, and a very melancholy one; for they do not perceive that it is the declared will of God to

enable them, at all times, and under all circumstances, to be "more than conquerors, through him that loveth them" (Rom. viii. 37); not conquerors before breakfast and slain by Satan afterwards, but *always* caused to "triumph in Christ Jesus" (2 Cor. ii. 14). If this is impossible, if we are constrained to the commission of certain degrees of iniquity at times and seasons, then it must be that our Lord Jesus Christ is only half our Master, and divides the supremacy over us with Satan. Are we not told that the victory which overcometh the world is our faith (1 John v. 4); therefore, where the victory is not obtained the impediment must be our *want* of faith. We do not continually realize our identity with Christ, and consequently, at such moments we lose our power of resisting Satan.

These sincere ones may object, how can they believe they can be always in the Spirit, always recognizing their identity with Jesus, when they are constantly reminded that the contrary is the case, and that power is not given them over their besetting sins, which, when aroused by Satan, hurry them out of the only place of safety, the felt presence of their Lord. But is it not written, "According to your faith be it unto you"? Do you suffer the unconverted one, to whom you preach salvation through the substitution of Jesus, to answer you that he cannot believe because he still feels the burden of sin? Do you not say to him, "Believe, and you will have the burden removed"? I therefore say to any who may object, "I am not saved from yielding to sin by Christ's life," believe that Christ is an Almighty High Priest and Advocate, just as when you were converted you believed Him to be an Almighty Saviour from the guilt and penalty of sin. Believe that when you find it is written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter i. 16), God commands what He will enable you to fulfil, and that it is a sacred fact, and no mere figure of speech, that "both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one" (Heb. ii. 11). Thus, if we say that those who by faith are united indissolubly with Christ are of necessity carnal at times, we are guilty of uttering an awful implication that though this is Jehovah's will, even our sanctification, yet that Satan can frustrate this purpose of love to those of whom it is declared, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Eph. v. 30).

H. P.

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—II.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 6—18.

IN this passage, the evangelist identifies the Word, who was in the beginning with God and was God, with the great and blessed One whom men knew as Jesus of Nazareth, and branches out into details the root-sentence, "The life was the Light of men." He shows us how by his own royal way this Living Word came into the world, till He stood revealed as incarnate God, passing on to the cross of sacrifice in the lowly pomp of humanity joined to Godhead, and witnessed to as such by his servant John. But observe, that in the paragraph, though John appears and re-appears, it is as one aside and subsidiary; he comes in parenthetically and subordinately; he stands like the herald whose work of fore-annunciation is finished, and who now takes a place among the spectators by the wayside, to say to those around him, "That is He." The grand object of attention here is the King Himself.

With the evangelist, however, let us for a moment step aside to this by-post of observation, and notice who he is beside us to whose voice of witness our attention is to be called. "A man

sent from God, whose name was John." The evangelist Luke tells us the story of his birth, and name, and training, and shows that he was indeed given by God, and brought up by God for his high work. But all men are, etymologically, *Johans*—God-given. This John, however, was born, like Isaac and Samuel, with special tokens around his nativity of God's power and goodness. It is the fashion of our day, too, to say that all men are God-sent, having each his mission in the world. And, no doubt, it is true that for every man there is a place, a duty, a work which he should do. But we must not confound this with the mission of inspired men. They are sent of God, as not merely bidden to do a work, but to carry a special message from heaven; nor only bound to do this, but qualified by the Spirit in them, authoritatively and infallibly, to do it. So was John sent. His work had two parts; he was harbinger and witness. He was to say to Israel, "The promised One is coming;" and then "He is come, and this is He." The other evangelists show us the forerunner; John shows the witness. But he is only the witness; not that Light, but one bearing testimony to that Light, saying, "Behold Him!" Not the sun, but the morning star on the brow of dawn; telling, by its shining last in the train of night, that the shadows are fleeing and the day is near; and then saying, by its very retirement into the brightening sky, "The day springs, behold the sun!" Mark also the benignant purpose, "That all men through him" (that is, through John's testimony) "might believe in the Light." Let every eye confess, and be filled with the risen day.

To this Light of men our attention is accordingly drawn. "That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John was "a burning and a shining light;" but he was not *the* Light. His lustre, too, was that of a kindled lamp. But the Word was true light—light in Himself, kindling, not kindled. It should be noticed that the little word *that*, though necessarily emphatic in the reading, is a supplement. A better would be the adverb *there*. Read the verse literally, thus: "There was the true Light which lighteth every man coming into the world." John came a witness, for there was coming into the world the true Light, to lighten the race. It is better to join "coming into the world" with "Light" than with man.

The phrase is a tautology in the latter connexion. Every man that exists, comes, of course, into the world. The meaning is in brief;—a true and universal Light—the Light of the world—was coming into the world, and John was raised to say, “Behold its shining.”

But now the evangelist, filling our eye with this true Light, will tell us not only how He shone when John pointed Him out, but also what pathway He took from his own heavenly glory through all the years of earth, till the fulness of times showed Him Jesus of Nazareth. Let us trace his delineation, in the 18th and following verses. A general reflection may be premised. We often, and scripturally, speak of the Gospel dispensation as the New Covenant. Yet it is the old also, which was from the beginning. Substantially, the Gospel was before the Law, in the form of promise instead of attested fact. In one feature, moreover, which distinguishes the Christian economy from the Jewish (its universality), it is important to notice that the last was also first. The revelation of God was made to the race, before it was given in special form to the family and nation. The law was added because of transgression. The waters of life, issuing from the fount of promise in Paradise, were designed to flow forth wherever man went; and when they issued anew from under the altar of sweet-smelling sacrifice built by Noah, they were designed, in the same manner, for universal diffusion. But when God saw how the desert earth was drinking them in, threatening to leave not a rill or pool from which men might draw salvation, He dug for them a narrow, rocky channel, and bade them flow there, till He should come before whose steps “waters should break out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.”

This order—universality before limitation by special revelation—is recognized in the passage. The evangelist is speaking of the Word, the Revealer of God, as the Light of the race; he now goes on to show how, step by step, He unveiled his light in the earth. There are three great stages—the revelation in the primary and patriarchal economy (v. 10), the revelation in the Mosaic dispensation (vv. 11—13), and lastly, the shining forth of the incarnation (v. 14). Observe what is said about each.

The Light “was in the world,” revealed to the race. As we saw before, when sin’s darkness fell on the world, the light of the

Word did not forsake it; it shone in God's works, and in the lamp of understanding and conscience in the breast. But more is meant here,—meant principally. The Light, as revealing God to sinners, was in the world. By the sentence on the serpent, which carried a promise to man in its bosom—by the cherubim barring the old way to life, but casting a light of God's presence still over the earth—by the institution of sacrifice—by the calling of a Church—by anticipatory revelations given through Enoch, Noah, and others—by the priesthood of Melchisedek, and otherwise—He shone in the world. And it was the world He had made. He might well expect to be received. What claim is there comparable to his? A man might more reasonably cease to hearken to the father that begat him, and the mother on whose knees he has been cradled, than refuse his Maker. Yet He was refused. The world knew Him not. It was not altogether ignorance. Paul tells us of the heathen, they liked not to retain God in their knowledge. They were, indeed, ignorant of his true character, and they disliked Him. Their ignorance and dislike wrought together, augmenting each other till He was ready to be forgotten wholly and for ever in the world He had made.

Then He tried a different and a closer revelation. He came with his lamp of promise to the tent of an idol worshipper in the land of Ur, and called forth from his country the father of the faithful. In process of time he carried his posterity into the land promised to them, and gave them statutes to distinguish them and preserve them pure in the earth. He came to his own by the covenant established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and by the Sinaitic institutions. He fixed his tent among the tribes of Israel, chosen for his peculiar people. Surely, all will know and rejoice in his light; and this light being maintained and reflected on the heights of Zion, the nations round will be unable to resist the attraction of its shining. Alas! it was far otherwise. He came to his own, his own house; and his own family received Him not. Even the Jewish people did not comprehend God's dealings with them, and became unstedfast in his covenant. It was as if the father of a family and head of a household, having been long absent from home, had unexpectedly returned, and trying first his dependents and former servants,

find himself forgotten, had knocked at his own door, and stepped into the midst of his children, to find himself disowned and thrust forth as a stranger. Yet, as if, in such a case, some of the little ones, reasoning less and believing more, had been led to welcome him as their restored father, so among the Jewish people there were happily many exceptions. There were from age to age those that received Him. Such were Samuel and David, and Hezekiah and Daniel, and all the pious among the people. A blessed lot was theirs; He gave them power to become sons of God. The expression is peculiar. Power is right, title, privilege; and the privilege in this case was great. Sons are to be distinguished from children. The pious among the ancient Jews were not adult sons; they were in a church of minors—heirs under tutors and governors, but still heirs, having the right of sonship; for their faith in the promised Messiah gave them birth in his family, and the babe shall yet be man. The Jews thought themselves all within God's family, and destined to inherit the world. But here the evangelist shows a distinction between the outward and the real Israel. The latter were born of God in no mere external sense; not by blood—that is by right of earthly parentage, as descended from Abraham or David; nor of the will of the flesh—i.e. the will of man as sin has left him—not by choice, therefore, of their own unrenewed will; nor by the will of man—not by prophet or teacher or king exerting any human power; but of God. There cannot be imagined a more explicit declaration than this, that the great change we designate *regeneration* is wrought by Divine power. It is not of a man's parents, nor of himself, nor of any minister or teacher, but of the Spirit of God. Moreover, observe in connection with this, that regeneration is not a doctrine or a privilege of the New Testament Church exclusively; it belonged to the Church in all ages. There is no religion of God in any epoch without change of character, resemblance wrought to God. Hence our Lord's words to Nicodemus, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?"

The third step in the revelation of the Light was the Incarnation: "And the Word was made flesh." The Son of God became man. He did not cease to be God—that was impossible; He did not merge his divinity in humanity; but He assumed

into union with his Divine person a human nature. We say human nature, for *flesh* here is equivalent to man; not body, not corrupt, sinful nature—but manhood. Yet it was manhood in its subjection to infirmity. Hebrews ii. 14 explains this: “Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” Nor was Christ only in our nature, but in our world; nor there aloof in some desert solitude, or on some lofty throne remote. It might have been thought that man, allied to Godhead, must necessarily, in a world like ours, “dwell apart.” But no, He maintained familiar intercourse with men, “and tabernacled among them.” In order to such intercourse a veil over his Divine glory was needful; but the glory within could not be altogether hidden. “We beheld” it, says John, “the glory as of (not *as if of*, but *really of*, such as became) the only-begotten of the Father.” They saw it in his miracles—at Lazarus’ grave, for example (see John xi. 4); they saw it in his life; it shone forth in his discourses, and was specially revealed at his baptism and on the mount of transfiguration, when witness came from the opened heavens, in the voice of the Father, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” What was this glory, this Divine outshining, which attested Jesus to be the Son of the heavenly Father? It was a fulness “of grace and truth.” All that was beautiful and good, and all that was real and holy, dwelt in Him. He was what was proclaimed of old in the great Name, “abundant in goodness and truth.” His glory had on it these two grand attributes, even as the sunshine has warmth and light. Compare with John’s words here these statements of Paul, “It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell;” “In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” God is light; God is love; the glory of the Son of God is light and love, truth and grace.

This fulness, moreover, like the sun’s, is for impartation. The evangelist goes on to say that, “all we have received of” it. The “we” are all believers under the gospel. We who believe on his name have drunk from his abundance without impairing it. What a fulness must that be that meets the wants of so many applicants! which millions of petitioners and millenniums of application cannot exhaust! Nay, not only so; but of petitioners who make one draught only a reason for asking more, and receive

"grace for grace." So, on the whole, would I explain the difficult phrase just cited,—grace after grace, favour upon favour. The words of James may be thought of here: "He giveth more grace." Even as the stream receives outflow after outflow of water from the spring; even as the earth receives wave after wave of light from the sun; even as from beds of fragrant flowers the passing winds bear cloud after cloud of perfume; so, and still more abundantly, we obtain, day after day, hour after hour, grace to help us in time of need; ever-growing supplies, carrying us from excellence to excellence, till we reach the perfection of heavenly light; and grace heaped on grace culminates in glory.

Joining, thus, verses 14 and 16, we regard the intervening verse as parenthetical, introduced to confirm the evangelist's declaration regarding the divinity of Jesus. As one, in proceeding with a narrative, will sometimes, at an important point thereof, appeal to a bystander, acquainted also with the facts, saying, "Is it not as I have stated?"—so the evangelist here turns aside for a moment to say, "My record concerning the Word is confirmed by the witness of John, who assigned Him the pre-eminence on the ground of his pre-existence and divinity." But a more minute reference to the terms of this parenthetic verse may be fitly conjoined with examination of the detailed account of John's testimony, which follows in the next paragraph.

Having stated our indebtedness to the fulness of Jesus, and enhanced our estimate of that fulness by showing how all believers draw from it, the evangelist reverts, in verse 17, to "grace and truth." In these two things, the plenitude of gospel blessings in Jesus contrasts with the Mosaic covenant. "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." This distinction of phrase should first be noticed: the law *was given*, grace and truth *came*. The first is measured, finished, a cistern of water; the other is unmeasured, continuous, a full fountain, ever springing: "For God gave not the Spirit by measure" unto Jesus. Then the law was not grace and truth. The law of Moses had two aspects. It was, first, a declaration of what must be done by the creature to obtain justification by works. It said, "Do, and live." Thus viewed, it had no "grace" in it; no favour. It was justice only: it blew a trumpet in the soul to wake the echoes of conscience. But Jesus brought in grace. He

said, "Live, and do." His voice was as the call of spring, waking the flowers to life. It was not thunder in the desert, but rain. In the law, however, in another aspect, there was the teaching of mercy; but it was only the shadow. The instruction was by type, and symbol, and adumbration. The truth, as opposed to this, came by Jesus Christ. True sacrifice, true atonement—the verity of oblation and typical rite—came by Him. The full unfolding of the purpose and heart of God waited for his coming, and then broke into the light of day.

Finally, in this passage, we learn that it was fitly so decreed; for the Only-begotten alone could unfold the purpose and love of the Father. No one else had seen the Father—possessed that intimate and full knowledge which vision well expresses. Moses himself, in whose hand, as a mediator, the law was ordained (Gal. iii. 19), saw not the face of God. The true mediator between God and men must be one "with God." Therefore He is the Son, the Word. He hath seen the Father, is in the bosom of the Father, having a most perfect knowledge of the Father's heart. The allusion, in the expression "in the bosom," suggests not merely the nearness of friendship, as John leaned on Jesus' breast at supper, but the intense and intimate affection of the parental and filial relationships. Love best understands; God can be known only as loved; infinitely known only where infinitely loved and loving. Thus the Father and the Son love and know. The word, it is worth remarking, is "into his bosom," as if to say He fills it—meets the infinite heart of Jehovah with that which satisfies it. And He is in the bosom of the Father even while incarnate on earth. Therefore, the revelation of the Father is fitly in Him. He hath declared Him. So He says himself, "No man knoweth the Son save the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son; and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

Let the last words suggest the closing reflections. Has the Son made known the Father to us? Has the Spirit of the Son been sent into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father? Have we received the Son as life—as light? Have we become in Him sons of God? Then, are we receiving more and more from his fulness? For the sinner, for the saint, what words of mercy are these: "FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH."

THE JUBILEE YEAR.—(LEV. XXV.)

THE Jubilee Year! the Jubilee Year!
The bondman rejoices to hail it near;
Sevenfold Sabbath and Year of Grace,
The burdened and weary and poor to bless.

'Tis the Day of Atonement! The utmost bound
Of Israel's land hears the joyful sound
Of the silver trumpet, so loud and clear,
Proclaim the gladsome Jubilee Year.

Fifty years' burdens of sorrow and wrong
Fall from their shoulders, and homeward they throng;
To their fathers' possession, their childhood's home,
Like doves to their windows they come, they come.

The fraud and the folly, the struggle and strife,
Of half-a-century's human life,
The usurer's riches, the poor man's cares,
Are all dissolved by this Year of years.

To Moses Jehovah rehearsed the tale
Of the glories hidden within the veil;
In Jeshurun's ears did their king recount
The things he had seen in the holy mount:

Shadows on earth of the things above,
The Father's grace and the Brother's love;
Promise of glorious things to come,
The enduring substance, the Heavenly Home.

Deliverer, Jesus, my Friend, in Thee
Jubilee, Sabbath, and Home I see;
Thou hast wearily laboured that I might rest,
Thy soul was afflicted and I am blest.

The atonement is made, and the trumpet's voice
Bids every sinner, "Rejoice! Rejoice!"
The Gospel proclaims an eternal release,
And bids the debtor go home in peace.

O God, for grace not to set our love
On the earthly things, but the things above;
For while the Jubilee Year draws nigh
They lessen in value, they fade and die.

In a little while shall the firmament ring
With the trumpet that heralds earth's patient King,
Who has sat so long at his Father's side
That none might perish for whom He died.

What then shall profit the stores of wealth,
Whether justly gotten or gained by stealth,
When every object of man's desire,
In the flaming flood rising ever higher,
Proclaims our God a consuming fire?

Enter thy chamber and safely hide
In the riven Rock, in thy Saviour's side;
Escape for thy life! To the Mountain haste!
Till all these sorrows be overpast.

The anguish'd earth is expecting the sound,
And the creature cries from the cursed ground,
"Thou risen Lord, by thy brethren alain,
Come, bless the world with thy righteous reign."

But man, whose nature He deified,
To his Brother, who sits at Jehovah's side,
Cries out in his madness, "Away! away!
Let me fill my belly with husks to-day."

Oh, charm him wisely, Almighty Love,
Let thy Spirit's breath o'er his heart-strings move;
Let the listening angels hear him cry,
"To my Father's house I will turn and fly."

O Lord, from sin set our spirits free,
And quickly come for thy Bride and me;
And every soul of thy loved ones bring
To share the throne of our Saviour-King.

M.

GOD'S WAY THE SAFE WAY TO WALK IN.—If a man travelling in the King's Highway be robbed between sun and sun, satisfaction is recoverable upon the county where the robbery was made; but if he takes his journey in the night, being an unseasonable time, then it is at his own perill; he must take what falls. So, if a man keep in God's ways, he shall be sure of God's protection; but if he stray out of them, he exposeth himself to danger.—*Spencer's "Things New and Old."* A.D. 1558.

“OPEN THY MOUTH WIDE, AND I WILL FILL IT.”

HAVE you ever peeped into a nest of unfledged birds just escaped from the shell? And if so, have you noticed the fact that their mouths are always open, wide open too? instinct teaching them to be constantly looking up to their parent for the nourishment she will bring them. Is not this why they grow so fast? Every day tells wondrously upon their appearance. Had the mother to stir up their nest and rouse them to receive each supply, what time would be lost, and how tardy would be their growth! They know not what they want; but a continually wide-open mouth implies a sense of need and expectancy of supply. It is their natural position.

May we not, as God's little children, learn a lesson from these nestlings; just to live in daily, hourly expectancy of blessing? “Thy blessing is upon thy people.” David had learnt it when he said, “Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord.” Utterly helpless, and empty and starving, as we feel we are (if God is teaching us), a wide open mouth, “eyes which fail with looking upward,” constitute our only true position, for we know not what we want; only our Father knows, and only He can give it. “My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” It is impossible for God to feed and his child not grow, and equally impossible for God's child to keep his mouth wide open and God not fill it, for He has said, “Open thy mouth wide, and *I will* fill it,” and “He is the Lord God of truth.” May not tardy growth in grace be traced to shut or only partly-opened mouths?

One great difference, however, there is between the unfledged nestlings and our Father's little ones. The former soon get beyond the need of a parent's care, the latter never. In fact, they are always dependent; as they advance, become more sweetly so than ever. They get to know these things through Jesus; and the more they know of Him and his will, the less do they feel able to go a step without Him. At first, stern necessity *only* drives them to Him. Then his matchless beauty

attracts them ; this, with their daily, hourly need, keeps them near, until the sweet experience of his unutterable love binds them to Him with cords which will only strengthen through an eternity of bliss ; when the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall still feed them, and lead them beside living fountains of waters, "and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

C. E. A.

"HIM THAT IS FROM THE BEGINNING."

"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning."—1 John ii. 13.

IN Him, that is on Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the living God, rested the faith of the patriarchs ; on Him the faith of Moses, and all the godly men under the law. To Him give all the prophets witness. He is the First as well as the Last: the beginning as well as the ending—the Alpha and Omega. He is the Lamb, fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, of whom in the volume of the book it was written, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, yea, thy law is within my heart." This is He who is both the root and the offspring of David, David's son and David's Adonai, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God. This is He who was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not ; the light that shined in the darkness, and which the darkness did not comprehend. This is that Holy One of Israel, and his Redeemer, through whom should flow all the sure mercies of David. This is that Root of Jesse that should stand as an ensign to the nations ; that Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, that should give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. This is that Seed of Abraham, to whom the promise was made. This is He who was before Abraham, and whose day Abraham rejoiced to see. This is the spiritual Rock in Horeb, and whose voice was refused when He spake on earth. This is that Wisdom whose delights were with the sons of men, and that Jehovah Tsidkenu, by whose name all the faithful shall be called. This is the King of Ages ; the King of Righteousness ; the King of Peace ; the

Living Bread which came down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. This is the second Man, the Lord from heaven; the last Adam; a quickening Spirit; the Man whose name is the Branch; the Living Stone against whom all must stumble, and fall and be broken, and upon whomsoever it shall fall he will be ground to powder. This is He who is clothed with light as with a garment; and that Eternal Sun of Righteousness for whom the heavens are a tabernacle, whose name is JESUS, and whose riches are never to be searched out; who hath died for our sins.

Oh, Reader, let not thy soul be ignorant of Him; let not thy heart be ignorant of his grace and love.

"MAKING A DIFFERENCE."

I HAD occasion to say something one day to a brother in the Lord about a near neighbour of his, a professing Christian, and in the course of our conversation I expressed some doubt of this person being a really converted man, inasmuch as it did not appear that grace had done very much for him in the way of subduing his temper. My friend replied, "I see it has done very much for him; if he were not a Christian, I should not like to live next door to him." My brother was wiser than I; he remembered that the person spoken of was naturally a man of fierce passions, and he did not, therefore, expect in him, even as a regenerated man, the same gentleness and forbearance as in one of a naturally amiable character.

I heard it said the other day of a Christian sister, "She is a very artful woman." From what I have heard of her previous to her conversion, she must have been by nature a very mistress of artfulness. Certainly she is not so now; though under the pressure of peculiar circumstances and the temptations of Satan, the old natural tendency will sometimes appear, and too readily it is inferred that she is not a child of God.

Let us not forget the justice of thus making a difference. It has been well said that it is the devil's work to mark the evil in God's people, whereas the Holy Spirit is ever recognizing the good.

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—III.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing."—John i. 19—28.

WE have already had occasion to observe that the work of the Baptist included two great parts—he was the Redeemer's forerunner and his witness. He was sent first, to foretell the Messiah's coming, and next, when He had come, to testify that this was He. The separating point between the two stages of his mission was the day of our Lord's baptism. Previously, he was the harbinger, with his trumpet of fore-announcement; thereafter, he was the testifier, with his uplifted finger of indication. It is worth noting that the other evangelists confine themselves, in their records of John's ministry, to the first division of his work. The writer of the fourth Gospel, on the other hand, presents us with a number of most interesting notices of the Baptist in the second character or position. The two parts of John's work must not, however, be conceived of as essentially distinct, the difference arises simply from change of circumstances. His ministry is one. His great task is to

direct Zion's attention to her King. Only as his forerunner, he spoke of Him as coming; as his witness, he spoke of Him, and pointed to Him, as already come. So the dispensation of grace, which was before the law that was added by reason of transgression, was in essence the same with the gospel covenant—only the word was, in the early ages, promise; now, it is the announcement of fact.

The testimony borne to the person of the Messiah by his forerunner John, as the evangelist relates it, takes a two-fold form, negative and positive. He disclaims the honours of Messiahship for himself, turning the eyes of expectancy away from his own person, and this we may call his negative witness; he points attention to Jesus as the Christ indeed, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, giving thus a testimony positive and direct. The passage, on which we are now remarking, contains principally the former.

We have already said, that parenthetically and in passing, the evangelist, for confirmation of his own record, appeals in ver. 15 to the testimony of the Baptist. As if in a foot-note, as we now write and print, he in effect says, We have the corroborative witness of John to this effect, in that cry of his, "This is He of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for He was before me." Before Christ appeared, his forerunner spoke thus of Him; after He came, he recalled the saying to his hearers, and pointed to Jesus as the great personage he had intended. The import of this word of witness may be thus given: "He that cometh after me in time and order of manifestation to Israel is preferred before me, advanced to higher honour and dignity, as was meet, for He was before me; He was before I was born into the world, and He was higher than I—pre-existent and pre-eminent." The phrase in the last clause is peculiar; literally, "He was my first." He

first, John second; the Lord before, the servant after. His ministry itself, rightly understood, taught this order of superiority; for the very foregoing of John was that of a servant. The only sense in which the Baptist was before Jesus implied that Jesus was first in dignity, the Chief on whose account the herald was sent on in advance.

We have recalled this record of ver. 15, slightly touched on formerly, because there is evident reference to it in the opening words of ver. 19, "This is the record of John." What was given in brief before, the evangelist will now more fully relate, giving details for summary. The occasion for the Baptist's testimony, as now adduced, arose out of the mission by the Jews in Jerusalem of certain priests and Levites of that city to question him. By "the Jews" we are to understand the Sanhedrim, the supreme ecclesiastical court of the day. The questioning by these commissioners was not for information simply, but to furnish data for decision on John's claims. The Jews of the great council, in pride of office, seem to say, by this mission, "We will test this new prophet; we will sift his pretensions, and take the real measure of this remarkable popularity of his." In doing so, at the same time, they bear evidence to the extent of the excitement and expectation which had been awakened by John's preaching. Elsewhere we read that "all men mused in their hearts whether this were the Christ," and the Sanhedrim themselves had not been able to shut out the general impression. The prescribed catechizing starts from this point. The priests and Levites do not indeed expressly say, "Art thou the Messiah?" but simply, "Who art thou?" John's reply, however, indicates that the import of their interrogatory was, in the first instance, "Art thou the Christ?" It may seem wonderful that they should be in doubt on this head, seeing that they were aware that the Messiah was to come of David's line and from David's town. But it appears that whatever impression

had been produced in Jerusalem by the events attending the birth of Jesus, had passed away; the lowly Nazarene had been out of sight of the great ones. Probably, too, the rulers were wholly ignorant of the previous history of John, nurtured, as he had been, by God in the desert, till the times of his showing unto Israel.

On the question as to his being the Christ, John will leave no room for misunderstanding his testimony. In the most open and emphatic way, he utterly disclaims the honours of Messiahship. He "confessed" the truth about himself and "denied" it not; neither affirming what was untrue nor refusing to avow what was true; but openly acknowledged that he was not the Christ. The Spirit of God, by the emphasis of these repeated assertions in positive and negative form, would have us note the humility and fidelity of John. The Baptist, as a sinful man, "subject to like passions" with others, as his prototype Elias was, was exposed to great temptation to assume honours not his own. Ambition might be ready to whisper, "The multitude wait to hail you as king. The very Sanhedrim are prepared to admit your claims. What is there between you and a throne but your own consent to take the crown?" But he had been otherwise taught in that school in the wilderness, where God trained him for his work. With humility, on this account the truer, however, in confessing and denying not his own inferiority, John is not so much lowering himself as exalting his Master. He says, "*I am not the Christ!* What poor expectations you have of Him when you fasten your thoughts on me! High as you think me, I am nothing to Him. Not this low ridge to which you look up from the plain is the summit, but the height far above."

John's answer was thus far only negative, so the interrogators go on, "What then? Art thou Elias?" Again the reply is, "No." But was not John the Elias pre-

dicted by Malachi? Did not Christ Himself say that Elias had come, his disciples understanding Him to speak of John the Baptist? Undoubtedly. How, then, could John say, "No," to the question, "Art thou Elias?" The solution of the difficulty is, that he answers to the meaning of the questioners. They asked of Elias in his own person, returned from heaven, and John was not he. He had come only "in the spirit and power of Elias." The interrogators, receiving a second negative, have yet a third question, "Art thou that prophet?" that special prophet foretold by Moses in the law, who should arise, like that great lawgiver; for the prediction (Deut. xviii. 15) was not understood by the Jews to apply to the Christ Himself. They referred the words to some great prophet who was to precede the Messiah; and some of them, grafting one error on another, and adding invention to misinterpretation, held that he would be revealed in the person of Jeremiah risen from the dead. But neither in the sense of the questioners, nor in the true sense of the prediction, was John that prophet; so again he answered, "No."

The suppositions of the commissioned priests were exhausted. They can only say further, "Who art thou?" To prevail the rather with him to be explicit, they allude to those who sent them, hinting at their authority and right to be informed. John answered without hesitation. But with his characteristic lowliness, he rather explains his office than describes himself. He becomes, so to say, impersonal; he is a crier's voice. Or say his function is personified; his preaching answers to the question, "Who art thou?" The answer, moreover, is from the words of Scripture. John had a place in prophecy, though not in the great text of Moses, which the Jews misunderstood. Esaias had spoken of him, and in figurative terms, borrowed from the custom of sending heralds before ancient

monarchs to summon the population of the province he was about to visit, to prepare roads fit for royal advent, he had depicted John's great duty as being to announce the Messiah's approach, and summon the hearts of men to give Him welcome.

The delegates of the Sanhedrim do not yet finish their questioning. They were Pharisees, and they must needs have a word about the rite of baptism administered by John, for they were exact and curious about all ceremonies. "Why baptizest thou then?" According to their expectations, the Messiah, or that prophet, or Elias, would rightfully baptize; but John was none of these. What, then, was his authority? The Jews looked for a great purification by baptism in the times of the Messiah, marking the introduction of a new age. But John had disclaimed being the Christ, or either of his great fore-runners, as they interpreted the Scripture; where was his right to administer the ceremony, and what meant it from his hand? It is noteworthy that John does not answer the inquiry directly. And see, again, with what characteristic readiness to exalt Christ, his Master, he passes rapidly from himself to his mightier Lord. He said, almost slightly, "I baptize with water;" that is all. There is not much in that to be questioned so eagerly about. The baptism to come from Messiah's hands is of altogether another sort. In express words John gave the contrast at other times: "I with water, He with the Holy Ghost and fire."

What follows is singularly impressive. This testimony has thus far been borne in the presence of the Master. As John proceeds, you conceive of him with reverent love directing his eye towards the spot where Jesus was standing amid the throng. It is not meet, however, that he should expressly point him out. Only having already said, "Look away from me," he now

says, "Look around ; He stands among you to whom the honours I have disclaimed all of right belong." He adds, "whom ye know not." Unacquainted with his person, perhaps ; but certainly, and principally, it is meant that they knew Him not as the Christ ; his character and claims unperceived and unrecognized, though He had been proclaimed already beside the waters of Jordan, the Father's beloved Son. Notice that, by this witness to a present Saviour, John answers indirectly the question of the Pharisees. He who could so point out the Messiah showed why he had come baptizing with water.

There follows this the witness already referred to by the evangelist in the 15th verse : "He it is who, coming after me in date and order of manifestation, is, when come, advanced above me." The added estimate of his own unworthiness in the presence of that greater, is exquisitely beautiful, radiant with humility and worship. "His shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." It is said that the office of unbinding a guest's sandals from his feet was allotted to the humblest menials in a household. The meaning, apart even from this, is evidently, I am not worthy to do Him the smallest, simplest, meanest service. Strong words for one who was stirring all Judea by his preaching ; whose voice had moved men's hearts, as the trees of the wood are moved by the wind ; than whom a greater prophet had not arisen among men. Strong words, but true. What was all this, before the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth ?

The evangelist concludes his account by telling us where these things happened. A reading, now generally accepted, gives Bethany, instead of Bethabara, as the name of the place.

Such reflections as these arise in closing. True honour ever declines the honour that belongs to another. The best men are still the humblest. The holiest, ablest

ministers are but unworthy servants of the Divine Master, who alone is worthy. Nothing humbles so fully as a sight of Him. In all things, over all persons, let Him have the pre-eminence.

"THE WINGS OF A DOVE."

"Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."—Ps. lxxviii. 18.

A POOR little trembling silver dove
With beautiful pinions of yellow gold,
Forsaking the regions of peace and love,
Nestled down in a potter's field of old;
And among the broken pots she lay,
But no rest for her was the rough hard clay.

All dust-soiled her plumage of silvery white,
And ruffled her feathers of yellow gold,
And hushed is the song of pure delight
So sweetly warbled in days of old.
Ah, why did the dove forsake her nest,
And fly to the potter's field for rest?

But the still small voice of a Radiant One
Sweetly is heard in the potter's field;
And brighter his smile than meridian sun,
While his love to the lone one He thus revealed:
"My dove, my fair one! O come away!
Thou shalt dwell with thy Saviour in endless day."

From his breast a golden chain He drew,
Inscribed with the motto "Obedient Love,"
Which with tender grace o'er her neck He threw,
And linked to his heart the feeble dove.
Now free to fly on her heavenward way;
But no longer to nestle on worthless clay.

Poor sinner, thy emblem, the "silly dove,"
Shall teach thee a lesson 'tis life to know;
But one thing on earth, it is Jesus' love,
Can rescue thy soul from eternal woe.
O fly to the blood! and thy guilty soul
Shall be washed, shall be healed, shall be "perfectly whole."

T. N. A. H.

THE CROSS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

II.—ABRAHAM AND ISAAC.

THESE wonderful Old Testament narratives, so simple yet so profound, have many points of view. The story of Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah, without regarding them as typical persons, presents to us such sweet examples of unwavering faith and unquestioning obedience, that we know not whether more to admire the old man who acts or the young man who yields—the heroism of sacrifice or that of suffering. But when we view this transaction as representative of the everlasting marvel of the Cross, to our admiration of Abraham and Isaac, men of like passions with ourselves, is added the intensest personal interest, and our hearts' deepest affections are moved by the infinite love of the Father, who spared not his own Son but delivered Him up for us all, and of the dear Saviour whose delights were with the sons of men, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

“God did tempt Abraham.” That is, He proved him. In the Book of Life God had written against Abraham's name, “The father of the faithful, and the friend of God.” This honourable distinction must be fairly won. The motto of God's nobility is, “Not words but deeds,” and the patriarch of the order must pre-eminently show it forth. How strengthening to the family of faith in all ages has been the act of Abraham by which the Holy Ghost declares his faith was perfected; and how comforting for the tempted saint to remember that his own faithful endurance shall help others to endure.

It is a grand thing, when God calls, to answer without hesitation, “Behold, here I am.” Sin caused Adam to hide among the trees of the garden, and self-will hurried Jonah to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. But the

man of faith says, "Here I am," and when God calls the little child replies, "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth."

Epithets are sometimes applied to men in Scripture which distinctly mark them as types of Christ; thus Mordecai is "the man whom the king delighteth to honour." David is "a man after God's own heart." Daniel is addressed, "O man greatly beloved;" Ezekiel is the "son of man;" and in the chapter before us Abraham is commanded, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest;" as if God were saying in his heart, "I will now foreshow that work of infinite love which in the fulness of time shall be accomplished in the sacrifice of the only begotten Son of my love."

When we read that "God so loved the world, that He gave his only-begotten Son," our minds may dwell upon the fact as of a gift passing out of the hands of the Giver into the hands of the receiver, without our realizing the companionship of the Father with the Son, from his holy incarnation and nativity, to his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion. But in the story of Abraham and Isaac the Holy Ghost reveals the fact that the Heavenly Father was leading the Obedient Son, and that He was the actor, and the Son the sufferer.

How full of wondrous meaning are those twice repeated words, "they went both of them together." For three days the ass carries the wood, and the young men bear them company, but when they come in sight of Mount Moriah, the father lays the wood upon his son, and takes himself the fire and the knife. True that the princes of this world crucified the Lord of glory, and that

"The powers of hell united prest
And squeezed his heart and bruised his breast,"

but this is the outward aspect of the redemption work. The love and justice of the God and Father, and the obedience unto death of the spotless Son, are the pillars on which

rests the eternal salvation of God's elect—the foundation stones of the everlasting covenant, entered into by the Father and the Son, before the world was founded, perhaps before an angel was created.

As I picture the multitude gathered round the cross, and consider how "through ignorance" they accomplished "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," I am reminded of the ass, which, having borne the wood for the burnt-offering, utterly unconscious of the purpose for which it was designed, now stood in brutish insensibility to the deep emotions of the father and the son, as they ascended the mount of sacrifice. It would be unjust to the "dumb ass" to make him, in anything more than his insensibility, the picture of man at the cross—

"A harden'd herd—a rebel race,
That mocked and trampled in thy blood,
And wanton'd with the wounds of God.

"When rocks and mountains rent with dread,
And gaping graves gave up their dead,
When the fair sun withdrew his light,
And hid his head to shun the sight;

"Then stood the wretch of human race,
And raised his head, and showed his face,
Gazed unconcerned when nature failed,
And scoffed, and sneered, and cursed, and railed.

"Harder than rocks and mountains are,
More dull than dirt, and earth by far,
Man viewed unmoved thy blood's rich stream,
Nor ever dreamt it flowed for him."

Yet there were spectators nevertheless, who gazed with interest and wonder at Abraham's strange proceedings. Doubtless many an anxious and astonished thought passed through the minds of the young men while they watched the father and the son as "they went both of them together" up the hill. So did the hosts of heaven, those "ministers of his which do his pleasure," look on amazed, while the

Father and the Son wrought out the mystery of man's redemption, "which things," says Peter, "the angels desire to look into."

But men and angels are, as we have said, figures in the background of the picture of the cross, as sketched in the story of Mount Moriah. As in the Psalms, where the Spirit of Christ which was in the Psalmist pours out his complaint before God, the cry arising from the reproach of man is as nought compared with the bitterness of the appeal, "My God, my God, why hast *thou* forsaken me? why art *thou* so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?"

When on the third day Abraham sees the place afar off, he bids the young men, "Abide here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." These three days were an important element in the trial of Abraham's faith. He had time enough to consider the offering he was about to make, and many times in many ways may nature and sense and self have pleaded against so great a sacrifice. Sometimes, when we have at first determined to obey the command of God, and might have done it at the moment, three days or less have wrought a grievous change. When Moses read the book of the covenant in the audience of the people, they said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient," but when they saw that Moses tarried to come down out of the mount, they gathered themselves together unto Aaron and said, "Up, make us gods which shall go before us, for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him" (Exod. xxiv. 7; xxxii. 1).

The young men tarried with the ass "afar off." And though men looked and stared upon Him when He died, and

"Angels astonished viewed the scene,
And wonder yet what all could mean,"

yet the sacrifice of Christ—Jehovah laying upon Him the iniquity of us all, and the Lamb offering Himself without spot to God—was a transaction “afar off” from the vision of all creatures. Man understood so little what was taking place, that when the Divine Sufferer uttered the cry, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani,” they did not recognize the first verse of a familiar Psalm, but supposed He called on Elias to come and save Him. And if angels, the higher intelligences, spake not at that dread night, it was because they were dumb with astonishment and wist not what to say.

Observe that Abraham says, “I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and *come again* to you.” Did he then expect that God would interpose to prevent his slaying his son? This was not Abraham’s hope. But he was resting in the God of resurrection, “believing that God was able to raise up even from the dead, from whence also he had received him in a figure.” This is ever the rock and refuge of a Christian’s faith. Nothing short of this will give the soul a settled rest in this changing and dying world. Thus the Holy Ghost by Peter shows that while God speaks to us by Jesus Christ, it is Himself, the invisible God, who raises from the dead, that is the ultimate object of faith: “Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, who was manifest in these last times for you, who BY HIM do believe in God, who raised him up from the dead and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be IN GOD.”

As they travel on alone, the son bearing the wood on which he was to suffer, and the father carrying the fire and the knife, Isaac says, “My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Isaac was spared the agony of anticipation; God was proving Abraham, and he would not torture his son with needless pain. But let us learn by contrast, here, something of the virtue of our Sacrifice, the Son of God. When He was living in the glory which He had with the Father before

the world was, by Him as one brought up with Him, daily his delight rejoicing alway before Him—then He foreknew the manger, and the garden, and the cross. When, rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, his delights were with the sons of men, how would those delights have been blighted with the thought of the sorrows awaiting Him in the ages to come, when He should wear the body prepared for Him, but for the love He bore us, and that the language of his soul was ever, "I delight to do thy will O God; thy law is within my heart." "So they went both of them together." As Jesus so often said, "For I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." "And He that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things which please Him." "Ye shall be scattered every man to his home, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." And how supremely blessed to take one farther step in this mystery of union, and hear Him pray for us, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

When they had come to the place which God had told him of, Abraham builds an altar, and lays the wood in order, binds Isaac and lays him on the altar upon the wood, and stretches forth his hand and takes the knife to slay his son. It is the father does it all. The earliest aspect of the cross shows Satan as the agent—"Thou shalt bruise his heel." Then in Cain we see how his brother, man, puts the Righteous One to death. But here it is the Father alone; as in the fifty-third of Isaiah, "It pleased the LORD to bruise him; *He* hath put him to grief." "*Thou* shalt make his soul an offering for sin."

"The LORD hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." And Zechariah says, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow." And Peter, "Those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, *He* hath so fulfilled."

But as God was only making trial of Abraham's faith, and as his obedience had now been fully proved, the angel stays his hand. There was no atonement in Isaac's blood. He could not redeem his fellow, nor give to God a ransom for him; and the loving God would spare Abraham the anguish of imbruing his hand in Isaac's blood, even though He had power to raise him from the dead.

And let us notice here how fully and freely God gives his child praise for his obedient act: "For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." Though it be by his grace alone, though it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure, yet when we do it He says, "Well done, good and faithful servant." It is no small honour when the righteous Lord can say to his child, "Now I know that thou fearest God." Let us ask ourselves, "Does God know by our actions that we fear Him." Does his Spirit bear witness with our spirits, "Now I know that thou fearest God"? Samuel might have pointed to Mount Moriah when he said to Saul, "To obey is better than sacrifice," for not Isaac's blood but Abraham's obedience was "an odour of a sweet smell; a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God."

But although Isaac was not slain, God's grand scheme of substitution was to be here proclaimed. Abraham saw a ram caught in the thicket by his horns, and went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son. The Divine idea of the innocent suffering instead of, and thus becoming a protection to, the guilty, had been dimly foreshadowed in Eden, where

God made coats of skins and clothed Adam and his wife. From age to age, with ever increasing clearness, did He develop this device of grace, by which the problem should be solved, how God could justly justify the ungodly, until in the fulness of time He sent forth his only Son, whom He loved, to bear the sin of many. For Him no ram should be found as a substitute. In his stead Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering.

"This Victim vengeance will pursue,
He undertook and must go through."

When Moses and Elias appeared to the Saviour, on the mount of his transfiguration, they spake of his decease (literally, his exodus—not only the decease but the passage through and out of death) which He should accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke ix. 31). And as this was the subject which occupied the minds of prophets on earth and angels in heaven, as well as of the spirits of just men made perfect, so was it ever in the mind of Christ during his sojourn here, especially during the years of his public ministry. The Psalms declare to us his meditations and his communion with God about his sufferings and death, and the Evangelists inform us that from the day of Peter's memorable confession, Jesus began to show unto his disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. And after his resurrection He sharply reproved their slowness of heart to believe the prophets' witness, saying, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

The idea of sacrifice, in the type, passes over from Isaac to the ram; but all types centre in the Antitype; the only and beloved Son of God is Himself the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. The transaction

on Mount Moriah was divinely stamped as a typical prophecy of the Great Sacrifice, by the name by which Abraham called the place—JEHOVAH-JIREH, *the Lord will provide*. It was said in Moses' day, "In this mount Jehovah shall appear." But we look back upon the accomplished fact, for Jesus, standing in the temple built on Mount Moriah, said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, he saw it and was glad."

A second time the angel calls to Abraham out of heaven, and for the third time are those tender words repeated, "thy son, thine only son." When David heard of Absalom's death, "the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept; and as he went thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" Even so, methinks I hear the Infinite Father, in anticipation of that day when his darling Son should die a felon's death, dwell on that tender phrase, "Thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest;" "thy son, thine only son;" "thy son, thine only son."

I wonder not that God took Abraham for his friend, for besides the fact of his obedience, there was in the circumstances and manner of that obedience, a link between the Father in heaven and the father on earth. The creature had, according to the measure of his finite love, gone through that which in the ends of the ages the Creator, out of his infinite love, should condescend to suffer. And we are prepared to hear Him say, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice." Truly God is not unrighteous to forget the work of faith and labour of love of his people. He will add reward to praise, calling him a good and faithful

servant, and adding, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

And Abraham dwelt at Beersheba—"the well of the oath." May we dwell there. He shall thirst no more who dwells by the ever-springing well of God's immutable word. Not for Abraham's sake alone did all this transpire, but for ours also, upon whom the ends of the world are come. It was because He would more abundantly show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, that He interposed Himself by an oath; "that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec."

M.

"I HAVE HEARD YOUR MURMURINGS."

SUPPOSE there are none professing Christianity who will admit that they doubt God's sovereignty, or his boundless love in Christ Jesus. How is it, then, that murmurs, either incipient or declared, resound among so-called believers, just as one has heard persons "say grace," as they term it, for meals, in partaking of which they will utter a thousand complaints? Now it is obvious that believers, in the true sense of the word, cannot murmur, for if they really credit their completeness in Christ and their oneness with Him, that the Father "has loved them as he loved" his Son, they cannot fear the happy result of every circumstance, nor reject the fact so clearly

declared in the question, “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” Let us reflect that if we profess to bow to the sovereign love of God in Christ, we must do so without reserve. It is mere mockery to say, ‘I could be submissive to the will of God if I had not such bad health; such a husband, or wife, or parents, or children, or employers.’ We must remember that it is in the precise position in which we find ourselves, we are required to be not only submissive, but acquiescent; not only acquiescent, but rejoicing. “Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.” “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice.” Be assured that if you have not the Spirit enabling you to rejoice, or at least to be in perfect peace in your present circumstances, because the God of love, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has placed you in them, you would never truly give thanks were the trials removed under which you repine. In God’s Word there is no half-way between obedience and disobedience; you are commanded “in all things to give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” “Giving thanks for all things to God.” Thus, if you fail in doing this, you must admit you are walking in disobedience; and though I am supposing you to be saved, it can only be so as by fire, for you cannot bring forth fruit unto God with an unthankful heart.

I do not deny that Satan is sometimes permitted to tempt even the most devotedly watchful Christian, through bodily or mental infirmity; but walking in the Spirit, we do not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; according to the promise, the Lord fights for us, and we hold our peace; the devices of the enemy are frustrated, and our communion with Jesus is unbroken.

Assuredly we shall mourn over our own failures and those of the whole redeemed family, as well as for the wickedness of the wicked; but mourning is not murmuring. In regard to any proofs of unfaithfulness in ourselves, while we recognize them as inexcusable results of walking in the flesh, still we know "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins." We have the same comfort when the disobedient walk of fellow-believers is forced upon our notice, whom we are bound to "restore in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted."

Thus I say "Mourn," for Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn;" but let not your mourning lead you to murmur, to be miserable and gloomy, and thus to grieve the Spirit, and bring an evil report on Christianity, but confess your sins and the sins of the spiritual Israel of God, and remember the power of our High Priest's presence at the right hand of God for us. Be comforted by the certainty that all believers, however feeble, are complete in Christ, and inalienably united with Him, though they may, through unwatchfulness, at times slip out of the realization of this glorious fact, and have to pass through the furnace of affliction for the perfecting of their faith and patience.

I am aware that some of my observations may seem to lack sympathy for suffering, but the Lord knoweth the heart. While lying on my peaceful couch of age and feebleness, I am often reminded of the awful number of oppressed and persecuted children of God in this terrible London, this terrible world. Then in the power of my oneness with the Lord, I cry to Jehovah for them. I seem to hear their groanings, the husbands (for some husbands are oppressed), the wives or children, governesses or servants. Then I think of the earthquake of 1750, when the dread of the judgment day forced a general howl of despair from the wicked, and Hyde Park was filled by

night as well as day with horror-struck men, women, and children, to whom Whitfield proclaimed, with a voice of thunder, the wrath of God against unbelievers, and the clear, silver-toned offers of pardon through faith in the crucified and risen Saviour.

In these hours I do not pray for an earthquake, I do not even dwell on the tyranny of the wicked, but I implore the Lord to deepen in the hearts of his dear oppressed ones his own heavenly consolations, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven."

My dear oppressed brothers and sisters! reflect, that in placing you under the same roof with these poor miserable sinners, the Lord honours you by giving you a most important mission, the mission of suffering, and the day shall declare it with its blessed results. Then will be manifested how the thought of being persecuted for righteousness' sake, for your Lord, in the persons perhaps of sick and aged relatives, has strengthened you, through the Spirit, to endure with unshrinking patience and meekness the keenest insults and injuries.

There are times, doubtless, when you lament that you cannot go forth to labour for your Lord by proclaiming the gospel in the various paths opened to so many. But I would warn you that it is a favourite snare of Satan, to tempt us to dwell on the work we might do for the Lord were our circumstances other than they are, while we forget to seek, in prayerful diligence, to "occupy" to the uttermost our actual opportunities of service in the Lord's cause. Perhaps your oppressors would not listen to preachers of

the gospel; but in you, my dear persecuted brothers and sisters, they have, close by their sides, missionaries whose believing prayers cannot be fettered, and whose meek and Christ-like endurance of every degree of harshness and cruelty cannot fail to preach with a power which no earthly eloquence can equal.

But I repeat my entreaty, watch against murmurs, for they are among Satan's fiery darts, and they increase your misery tenfold. In saying this, I am not cruelly trying to debar you from pouring out your sorrows into the bosom of your compassionate Lord, nor do I blame you for seeking counsel, sympathy, and help in holy converse with Christian friends, who can effectually aid you by their prayers. But I would guard you against yielding to those thoughts of self-pity which are entirely of the old nature, and which unfit you for glorifying your Lord. How can you bear testimony for Jesus, when it is evident you are not happy under his rule; not satisfied that of the Lord *alone* you receive the wages of your inheritance? We are ignorant of the extent of the sufferings and persecutions we may be called upon to endure, therefore we shall do well to watch against the sin of magnifying our present troubles, whatever their extent, for "if we have run with the footmen and they have wearied us, how can we contend with horsemen; and if in the land of peace wherein we trusted they wearied us, how shall we do in the swelling of Jordan?"

We have for our encouragement not only the certainty that *all* things work together for good to them that love God, but that deepest of all consolations under direct oppression which Paul enjoyed, when he "endured all things for the elect's sake, that they might obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory," rejoicing in his sufferings in the blissful assurance that he was filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh for his body's sake, which is the Church.

No one indeed knew better than Paul that his adored Master's sufferings left nothing behind on their infinite efficacy, but he also knew that Christ is so united with each individual member of his body, that we may feel assured his indwelling by the Spirit gives sanctity and power to our every trial, rejoicingly endured, to the praise of his glory, for both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one; as our Lord himself said to his Father, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."

H. P.

"THE BODY OF THIS DEATH."

THE following extract from one of the sermons of an honoured minister, Mr. Porteous of Kilmair, who served his Lord between 1732 and 1775, describes the deep consciousness of the body of sin and death still cleaving to the soul that has found peace and safety in Christ; the self-loathing on account of it; the life of inward conflict more than of outward work; the humble dependence on divine grace for preservation; and the earnest watching unto prayer, which characterized the true religion of Scotland at that time, and is the experience of God's elect in every age:—

"A traveller, while passing through a desert, was overtaken by a storm. So violent was the tempest, that he at last despaired of surviving it. Just as hope died within him, his eye was caught by a light that glimmered in the distance, and he hastened his steps to reach it. Arriving at the place where it shone, he sees an open house; entering which, he finds himself in an apartment, with a fire on the hearth and a seat placed beside it. He sat down, and making himself as comfortable as possible, he felt happy at his escape from the storm that was still raging without. On entering, he had seen nothing but what has already been noticed; but about midnight, happening to look round, he saw a dead body lying in a corner of the room. The corpse having begun to rise, as he looked at it, the poor man became dreadfully frightened;

and as the dead was rising higher and higher, he rushed to the door to escape from the house. But the storm was still so violent that he dared not go out, and no choice was left to him but to return to his place by the fire. For a time the corpse was at rest, but he could not keep his eyes off the corner where it lay; and as he looked it began to rise, and now higher than before. Again he sprang from his seat; but, instead of rushing to the door, he this time fell on his knees. As he knelt, the dead body lay back again, and he ventured once more to his seat by the hearth. He had not long been there, when up again rises the corpse, and now still higher than formerly; so on his knees again he fell. Observing that only while he was kneeling the dead lay still, he rose not again from his knees till the day had broken, and the shadows fled away."

THE COMING OF CHRIST.

THE whole primitive church expected the coming of Christ, and believed in his temporal reign. This belief, so strong and firm in apostolic times, faded in proportion as faith lost its early simplicity. Men took to materialize precepts and spiritualize prophecy, and thus truth got modified on both sides.

I am one who take the promises in a literal sense. I believe with all my soul in my Saviour's coming. I believe that our earth will witness the scenes described by the prophets, and I have drawn my conviction from the study of the Bible.

The Lord comes! As the lightning shining from the east to the west, so is the shining of the Son of God. He comes surrounded by his redeemed, by myriads of angels, comes as Conqueror to claim his crown.

The hour has struck, the souls of the elect have put on their glorified bodies. God's power has done this. In the same moment the faithful who still live have been conscious of a marvellous transformation. It is not death; it is rather the casting off a chrysalis covering. In the twinkling of an eye, incorruption has triumphed over corruption.

Do you realize this moment, this coming, this object of faith, now beheld from afar, as actually come to pass?

Yes, it is true; my imagination is not at work, my eyes see. It is indeed Jesus my Lord. This is He who had pity on me; who suffered for me; whom I love with all the strength of my soul. My breast expands with a divine breath, each moment I love more, and feel that I am more beloved. My God! oh, to prostrate myself before Thee! to adore Thee! It is as though a sun had risen within my heart. At one glance my eye has taken in the thousand thousands in thy train. My dear ones, there you all are; you indeed, you living, you for ever mine—all of us the Lord's. But yesterday, I laid your bodies in the earth, but yesterday I wandered alone, losing myself in the immensity of my sorrow, and now you are here, my hands touch you, you will not die any more. If God's arm did not sustain, surely man would founder in this ocean of bliss.

The rest of the dead live not again, says the Scripture, till the thousand years are over.

Israel has seen the One that hung upon the cross come down from heaven; Israel has beat his breast and gathered round the King of glory, his King.

Then an act of incalculable importance is accomplished. The angel who has the keys of the pit seizes upon Satan, throws him into the gulf, and sets a seal upon him.

Peace is made on earth. No more wars, no more wrongs; a law of love easily obeyed; an *hosanna* of all creation.

Let us pause for a moment. I want to breathe this new air, and to open out my soul to this light.

Satan bound. Do you comprehend the importance of the fact?

There is in the Bible a narrative which gives a lively representation of Satan's work among men. Joshua, the high priest, is standing before the Lord. On his right hand a dark form rears itself, standing too—Satan—to resist him.

I know it well, that intercession which Satan resists. Witty men have ridiculed it; they have described that grotesque medley of serious and frivolous thoughts; have held up to us in raillery, that cry of disquieted hearts, disguised by the verbiage of vanity. Possibly Satan does not resist *them* when they pray.

But we poor creatures whom he tortures, we who would fain believe, and who hear him whisper sceptical words in our ear; we who would love, and feel his arid breath pass over our hearts; we who want to concentrate our minds on God, and before whom Satan displays the most paltry of earth's toys; we who wrestle unto blood, torn, often overcome by him; we who rise battered by our fall, and lift to our Father maimed and trembling hands; we who know that our enemy is there, always there, even to that death-bed by which He stays to watch us; why, to be freed from Satan, the great resister, the unpitying adversary—this for us is the crowning deliverance.

No more barriers between Jesus and the nations; no longer an accuser between the soul and God.

If original sin remain, the tempter no longer aggravates it; if the old heaven be still there, Satan is not there to make it rise.

We had need of faith; those happy ones have sight, joy, harmony, everything to lead them to give their heart to holiness.

Oh, I can understand that hymn of rapture which marks our earth's course through the skies. The ground is moved, the forests clap their hands, the streams fertilize the sandy wastes, the rose blooms in the desert. No more desolate places, no more broken hearts, we hear no longer the lion's roar, the shrieks of the slaughtered are changed to songs of thanksgiving. The Lord's alliance with his creatures glorifies the universe.

You are shocked at this! Such a scheme seems to you unworthy of God who is a Spirit. For my part, it leaves me penetrated with reverence, admiring reverence. Without this restoration of all things there lacked one ray of my God's perfect glory.

It well beseems the Creator to re-establish his work in its pristine beauty; to restore to it the lustre it possessed when He spake the word and it was made. It becomes his power to snatch it entire from the grasp of Satan. It befits His glory to display it radiant once more; more touchingly beautiful, because it has known suffering; more precious, because Jesus has died for it; more firmly rooted in holiness, because it has struggled to recover it.

You would have this earth in which God has taken delight,

left by Him to perish under the curse; you would have Him to leave this triumph to Satan. Not so, the rebellious angel shall not occupy it. From the depths of the abyss he will see the earth renewed, the true Monarch govern the kingdom he, Satan, had for a season usurped; the child of God serve Him in this enlarged Eden; the delivered creature willingly obey man; the murders and lamentations cease; the restoration of all things be accomplished. Satan will see all this. If he did not see it, if we did not see it, Satan would have gained some advantage in the conflict; he would have successfully resisted God.

And now, tell me, do not you find such a restoration sublime? Does it not seem to you worthy of the Lord, this restoration of a world lost by the madness of man; tormented by the rage of the great enemy, saved by the very Son of an offended God?

The mountains of Judea have beheld thy cross, Jesus, Thou Holy of holies; the walls of Jerusalem have heard the shouts of the maddened crowds that dragged Thee from Caiaphas to Pilate; Gethsemane has drunk thy blood; Golgotha has echoed with the mocking laughter of the Roman soldiers; the sighs of thine agony have passed over this land. Thy own country, Lord, the land of promise, shall see thy triumph; and stirred to its inmost depths, shall break forth in a cry of love and welcome.

In east and west, the children of this land have led a painful life. They have been mocked, trampled upon, till at times even they doubted, despaired of themselves and Thee. The earth that saw them so wretched, so prostrated beneath the hatred of the world, shall see them humble still, but radiant with joy, surround their God who reigns in the midst of them.

Oh, the tears of thy mourners, Earth! the lonely steps of those who walked among thy tombs! Thou who hast swallowed up generations of cherished beings; and to those who asked of thee their dead, hast shown thy dust as sole reply: thou wilt restore them all, eternally young and happy; they will deck thee like a burst of new flowers, two and two, in families, in companies, they will walk again, singing with joy, on the sites they loved.

The beasts of thy forests; all that move in solitudes unknown to men; all that swim in the abysses of the deep,—used once to tear each other to pieces. A sound as of some pillaged town; a

nameless sound, which, as we listen to it, fills the soul with terror, rose incessantly from thy whole surface. Then they who listen will hear a hymn of deliverance burst forth from mountain and plain, and the waves of the ocean will repeat it to their shores.

Thou thyself, curse-stricken earth; thou whose breast cracks at the equator beneath the breath of the simoom; whose barren poles are crushed beneath icebergs,—thou shalt blossom out fair and fresh, younger than in the days of Eden. Thou hast borne our rebellion and our woe through the immensity of space; thou shalt then march in bridal beauty through a tranquil sky; blessed among worlds, bearing on thy surface the redeemed and the Redeemer.

How will these things be?

I know not, but God knows. The least moral contradiction troubles me more than mountains of physical impossibility.

How will the dead rise? * * * In what way will Jesus govern? Where will his children dwell? Will there be some easy method of communication between earth and heaven? a marvellous ladder like that which Jacob saw?

Of all this I am ignorant. All this is my Father's business; I am not at all uneasy about it. Nothing is too hard for Him whose seven flats created the universe.

He will come soon! Watchmen lost in the darkness, we send this cry of hope one to the other.

Yes, the morning stars will soon sing together the hymn which greeted the dawn of the seventh day; the bones that strew the ground will soon rise; Jesus will soon return.

I shall see thee again, thou holy city, no longer depressed and trodden down by unbelievers; I shall see thee glorious, I shall salute thee, queen of the world. Thy fountains will gush forth anew, O Judea! Under thy oaks, O Carmel, the turtle-dove shall fly in peace, not fearing the cruel sportsman! Desert, thy wide swamps shall change to gardens; thy swords, turned to ploughshares, shall prepare thy rich harvests, O country, everywhere called blessed!

You who weep, say, Are not your tears less bitter? You who are tossed upon the open sea, do you not begin to discern the shores of the land of life?—*The Near and the Heavenly Horizons.*

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—IV.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."—John i. 29—34.

THREE descriptive names or titles given by our evangelist to his Lord, and with such application peculiar to his writings, have already met our eye in this first chapter of his Gospel—the Word, the Light, the Life. All these appear elsewhere in the pages of the beloved disciple. The passage we are now to review furnishes a fourth—the Lamb. Other sacred writers, as Isaiah and Peter, compare the Saviour to a lamb; but John alone makes the name an appellation of the Divine Redeemer. With them, too, the comparison instituted is between the lamb and the suffering Saviour; with John, the Lamb is in glory, receiving the homage of all creation, seated on the throne of God, or surrounded on the heights of the celestial Zion with the ransomed thousands of Israel. Yet one vision of the Illustrious One in the opened heavens shows how He carried that title with Him from the cross of Calvary. When John first saw Him He "stood a Lamb as it had been slain." But as the evangelist was not the first to apply the name to Jesus, so neither was he the first to indicate its main significance. The Baptist did both things when he pointed to the

approaching Saviour, and cried, in the hearing of the throngs around him, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" If the very probable opinion, that John was one of the two disciples mentioned in the next paragraph of this chapter, be correct, then the evangelist heard from the lips of his first master the beautiful title which, in connexions so interesting, he has applied to his second and greater.

We noticed formerly a graduation in the terms of John's testimony to the Messiah. Yesterday, he said, "He is come; He stands among you." But he did not point Him out. Did he expect that every hearer would immediately besiege him with the question, "Where and who is He?" And did the general indifference disappoint him? He will, then, to-day, leave no excuse for failing to recognize and acknowledge the Lord. Yet he will point Him out in a character strange to the expectations of the Jews, though both their temple services and their Scriptures should have made it otherwise. Seeing Jesus coming to him, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" That this pregnant saying was uttered in the hearing of a general audience, and not simply of John's personal disciples, we infer from the mention immediately afterwards of the Baptist's public testimony. Why, then, did not the people forthwith receive their Messiah? Ah! as yet, though they have been receiving the baptism of repentance confessing their sins, they are looking for a Deliverer, who shall be the Lion rather than the Lamb. They do not understand how the Lion of conquest must first be the Lamb of sacrifice.

It is in keeping with the whole tenor of John's ministry that he should be found, as in this saying, exhibiting an enlarged and spiritual apprehension of the character and kingdom of the Christ. He had come attended with no train of miraculous works; his mission was attested by the

awful power of truth; his words went into men's souls with the searching glow of fire; his voice was of sin, doom, repentance, and salvation. And now, that for the first time he expressly points out the Chief whose coming he fore-announced, in what character does he present Him? "Behold your leader! Behold the commander of the people! Behold the King!"? No. "Behold the Lamb of God!" The language of John in this golden text can only be explained by reference to sacrificial rites. There is no mere proclamation of the gentleness and harmlessness of Jesus here. The grand thought is, "See the Sin-bearer!" The Jews were familiar with the association of the lamb and sacrifice. They had the yearly paschal offering, and there was the daily morning and evening sacrifice. In both, the victims were lambs. Perhaps John's words would more readily be referred to the daily than to the yearly offering. To the hearer familiar with Scripture there were two passages, apart from the prescription of the Mosaic ritual, which the saying before us would bring up to thought, as we think it was designed to do. When John cries, "Behold the Lamb of God," the voice sounds like the answer, long deferred but sure, to Isaac's blind question, "Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" and is, at the same time, the verification of Abraham's reply, which, apt for the immediate occasion, one feels to be flinging out a far-reaching flash of faith, "My son, God will provide a lamb for a burnt offering." Yes, Jehovah-jireh witnesses not in vain. "Behold the Lamb of God!" Then, when the Baptist adds, "which taketh away the sin of the world," you think of Him who was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter," on whom "the Lord laid the iniquity of us all;" who "bare the sin of many." The thought conveyed by "taketh away" is precisely the same with that expressed by "beareth." It is the bearing of expiation—the removal of guilt by atone-

ment. And when the Lamb of God is said to bear away the sin of the world, He is first of all pointed out by John as provided for the Gentiles as well as the Jews; given by God to men as men, not to a select nation. And next this doctrine is taught, that the heavenly Victim is set forth as qualified to bear the sin-burden of men, all and whosoever, that shall cast the burden on Him. Oh, world of sinners, give Him your load to carry; He beareth away sin—all sorts of it, all amounts of it—for any one, for every one, “whosoever will.” Behold the Lamb of God! mark Him; trust Him; receive Him; receive Him in his sacrificial character, and say, “Be thou the Lamb in our stead.” John’s present tense we like to think of as a present tense for all time—He “beareth” away. The worth of Christ’s obedience unto death ascends before God as a perpetual oblation. It is to the sinner as an ever-flowing stream, sweeping guilt-burdens away fast and oft as they are cast in; or as an ever-burning fire, consuming every sin-load which a child of Adam will only consign to the awful flame of mercy.

To link this witness to the Messiah with former testimony, and show his hearers how all along he had been leading them to this point; to recal also other truths regarding his great Lord, already uttered in their hearing, John said to the people, “This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man who is preferred before me.” He said that so lately as the day before. His reference to the saying now affirms in effect: “This is the person who stood among you yesterday; greater than I, though later born and later manifested; the man, whose outward appearance betokens no regal dignity, but who is so transcendently my superior that I am unworthy to unfasten his sandal. Take note of Him. This is HE!”

John’s whole testimony is the more remarkable, in that when he began his work of heralding the Saviour he had

no personal acquaintance with Him as Jesus of Nazareth. He knew that the Messiah was about to be manifested to Israel, and he knew that his commission to preach and baptize was for the purpose of preparing Israel for that manifestation; but he was a stranger to Messiah's person. Yesterday, he said to the people, "ye know Him not;" and now, in the literal sense of personal acquaintance, he says, "Even I knew Him not." John was God-nurtured in the wilderness, and, we think, had never hitherto met with his relative and Lord—Jesus, the Son of Mary. To what extent, if to any, he was made acquainted by Zacharias and Elisabeth with the facts of Jesus' birth, we have no means of knowing. We think that the connexion of the statement by Luke, that John was "in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel," with the words, "the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit," points him out as singularly secluded and heaven-trained from very early years.

It was, at least, by direct revelation that he came at length to know his Master. God had given him a sign beforehand. John had announced to the people that an awful yet gracious Baptizer would come, baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire; and God had said, "By the descent of the Holy Ghost I point Him out." On the day of Jesus' baptism by John the sign came. In bodily shape, in form of a dove (luminous, as we conceive, dove of light or fire, resting on the head of Jesus, as in the gathering shadows He passed away, Spirit-driven into the wilderness), the Spirit descended on Him while praying, and abode upon Him. At the same time, though not mentioned here, there came a voice from the excellent glory, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." John saw the sign, and heard the voice—saw the Divine finger point out the Son of his love; and, taking up the celestial testimony, bore witness to Jesus, "This is the Son of God."

On comparing John's words in this passage with Matthew's account of the baptism of Jesus, a slight difficulty presents itself. John says here, "I knew him not;" yet, as Matthew records, when Jesus asked baptism at his hands, he at first refused, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" At that moment, therefore, he must have recognized Him. The difficulty has been solved by some in this way: John knew Jesus as a peculiarly holy man, but not as the Messiah, or with only a secret leaning of thought to the conviction that He was the Messiah; his conviction was not yet confirmed. We scarcely feel that this solution is admissible. We can hardly conceive how John should know Jesus familiarly, and fail to know Him as the Sent of God. We think it preferable to suppose that Jesus was personally unknown to John till they met by Jordan. But as Jesus came to be baptized, a secret Divine intimation admonished him of the presence of his Lord; but for confirmation, and to furnish evidence to which public appeal could be made, the visible sign followed. To this sign John refers here, because he is bearing record to others. This is the strain of his witness: "I saw the Spirit descending upon Him, and now I summon you to receive Him whom God so marked out as his Servant and chosen One." "Behold," said Jehovah by the prophet of old, "behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." And when John had seen Him anointed by the Spirit, and heard Him proclaimed as the Father's beloved, he said "Behold the Lamb of God, who is the Son of God." For so has God provided a Lamb for a burnt-offering; not thy son, O Abraham, thine only-loved one; no, but His own.

We conclude with John's word of witness: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"

NOVEL READING.

NOW the subject of weak Christians reading works of imagination and fiction, it is sometimes said that if Christ and his service do not suffice to fill and satisfy the souls of believers, such lack of love is so grievous that no outward demonstration of coldness could increase the guilt; and it is even added that to preach self-denial to such persons would only induce self-righteousness.

Now, though "the joy of the Lord is our strength," (Neh. viii. 10), yet surely it is no trifling error to depreciate self-denial, when our Lord has said, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark viii. 34). If we are to take it for granted that all those not perfected in faith and love are tares, there is an end at once of "exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching" (Heb. x. 25). Is the time for reproving, rebuking, exhorting, already past? (2 Tim. iv. 2), or does the command of the Holy Spirit through Jude 23 yet stand good, to save our erring brothers and sisters "with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh"? Is it the part of stronger Christians to sit aloof in self-satisfied safety, leaving our unruly or feeble fellow-members to plunge deeper into disobedience, whatever their temptations may be, whether to scenes approaching to the character of "revellings and such like," or to time-wasting cogitations of fancy, and the perusal of works of fiction? Shall we, some of whom have perhaps in former days smarted under the chastening hand of God for these very things, forbear to admonish the unwary against them?

Did we see one of the poor of the flock tempted in the slightest degree to intemperate habits, should we not

recognize it as our bounden service to Jesus to warn such a backslider? And what is it but yielding to the seductions of intellectual inebriation when believers slide into the baneful custom of wasting their Lord's precious talents of time and power of thought, by thus consenting to exist in an ideal world, whether it be filled with dreams of fiction, the sentimental castle-building of youth, or the depressing and really rebellious regrets of more advanced years. In the name of the Lord, "who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling," I would say to these slaves of evil and forbidden habits (for such they are, however skilfully disguised), "Awake, ye sleepers, and call upon your God. Awake to a sense of your high calling of God in Christ Jesus, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." But, alas! you are so enervated by self-indulgence, that the witness of the Spirit is almost dying out within you, and you scarcely believe that your's *is* a high calling. You have partaken so long of the Satanic cup of mental fascination, that it is like attempting to arouse an opium-eater to the strenuous work of life, when we remind you, with clear, strong voice, that ye did run well, and ask, Who hath hindered you? With hands hanging down, and feeble knees, every muscle relaxed, and nerves unstrung, plunged in fanciful speculations, or all the realities of time and eternity obliterated in the fiction you are reading, it may well be found difficult to discern in you traces of the soldier of Jesus Christ.

In the love that worketh no ill to his neighbour, I reiterate my call to you to "Awake! knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; cast off therefore these works of darkness and put on the armour of light," of which Satan hath divested you "for your shame among your enemies."

Now in these latter days, when the Captain of our salvation is so especially calling on all his servants, each in his measure, to "come to the help of the Lord against the mighty," to fight his battles against the hosts of enemies who darken the air on all sides, like clouds of locusts, what have you believers to do (if indeed ye be believers), to fold your hands in sleep, and dream your fictitious fantasies, or nurse your graceful melancholy? Go to some new converts, plucked by almighty love from the darkest dens of Satan's declared worship, and brought in adoring faith to Christ, and to the sublime recognition of their union with Him—ask these bright children of a revived Christianity what is the secret of their strength against the natural dread of poverty, and the still worse trial of the cruel mocking and derision of their former associates, with whom they are, perhaps, still constrained to dwell. Will they not answer you, "It is the almighty love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us: it is the thought, Jesus endured the terrific anguish of Gethsemane and Calvary, the hiding of his Father's countenance, for us! and *we*, how little is the very utmost *we* can do, or suffer, or renounce for Him"?

And what has Jesus done for these lambs more than He has done for you?—*you* whom He hath fed all your lives long to this day; you whom He hath kept in such freedom from persecution that you have now "waxed fat and kicked," like Jeshurun of old; you whose ungrateful hearts have almost forgotten how often He has healed your backslidings and loved you freely. And although your having neglected to use the shield of faith, has caused fiery darts of Satan to reach you, yet how has your Redeemer's gracious intercession made their mission remedial instead of penal. Some of you I might remind of the hour when you gave Satan such advantage that he almost drew you to the verge of insanity by your disobedient remem-

brance of the things that are behind, instead of submissively and arduously pressing on to those which are before; and then it was that this same pierced hand of Jesus has sent you some messenger of grace to whisper to your almost distracted soul (distracted by your own unwatchfulness and prayerlessness) the soul-reviving words, "My sheep shall never perish, and none shall pluck you from my Father's hand."

And now, my poor backsliding friends, I implore you look more at Calvary, and your own sorrows will be soon forgotten, or irradiated by the flood of light and love beaming from the cross of your once agonized Redeemer, your Substitute, who, knowing no sin, became sin for you that you might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. v. 21). I would send you, too, to visit some lunatic asylum—some incurable hospital. Behold at these places some of the terrible woes from which the intercession of Jesus has saved *you*, and when you return you will no longer tempt God to pour distraction on the brain you have so misused in your deluding studies, the nature of which you must be aware tends to increase your temptation to rebellious murmurings. Full well you know the ills, or fancied ills, of your life, appear in tenfold gloom when contrasted with these unreal pictures of highly-wrought happiness, which earth nor heaven has ever seen, and being false it is plain they must be Satan's productions, in his chambers of imagery, the unsanctified human brain.

If you who may read these remonstrances be really wheat, not tares, I cannot think it possible, at this period, when God is working so powerfully by the Holy Ghost through the blessed name of Jesus, that you will dare any longer to be even *partial* idlers in your Lord's vineyard; that you will longer shrink from giving yourselves, body, soul, and spirit, to the Lord, "redeeming the time because

the days are evil," terrifically evil to men who have not faith to "deliver themselves from this untoward generation" (Acts ii. 40); but thrice blessed to those who, knowing they are not their own, but are bought with a price, press forward with true and glad hearts to glorify God, if it need be, even unto death, in their body and their spirit, which are his (1 Cor. vi. 20). H.

FORGIVENESS BEFORE LIFE.

AN EXTRACT FROM JOHN BUNYAN.

"You being dead in your sins, and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses."
—Col. ii. 13.

"**Q**UICKENED" and "quickened together with him." The apostle hath words that cannot easily be shifted or evaded. Christ then was quickened when He was raised from the dead; nor is it proper to say that He was ever quickened either before or since. This text also concludes that we—to wit, the whole body of God's elect—were also quickened then, and made to live with Him together.

True we are also quickened personally by grace, the day in the which we are born unto God by the gospel; yet before that we are quickened in our Head; quickened when He was raised from the dead; quickened together with Him.

Nor are we thus considered, to wit, as dying and rising, and so left; but the apostle pursues his argument, and tells us that we also reap by Him, as being considered in Him, the benefit which Christ received, both in order to his resurrection, and the blessed effect thereof.

First. We received by our thus being counted in Him that benefit which did precede his rising from the dead, and what was that but the forgiveness of sins? For this stands clear to reason, that if Christ had our sins charged upon Him at his death, He then must be discharged of them in order to his resurrection. Now, though it is not proper to say they were forgiven to Him,

because they were purged from Him by merit, yet they may be said to be forgiven us, because we receive this benefit by grace.

And this I say was done precedent to his resurrection from the dead; "He hath quickened us together with Him, *having forgiven you* all trespasses." He could not be quickened till we were discharged, because it was not for Himself but for us that He died. Hence we are said to be at that time, as to our own personal estate, "dead in our sins," even when we are "quickened together with Him." Therefore both the quickening and forgiveness too, so far as we are in this text concerned, is to Him as we are considered in Him—or to Him with respect of us.

"Having forgiven you all trespasses." For necessity so required, because else how was it possible that the pains of death should be loosed in order to his rising, so long as one sin stood still charged to Him as that for the commission of which God had not received a plenary satisfaction? As therefore we suffered, died and rose again by Him, so, in order to his so rising, He, as presenting of us in his person and suffering, received for us remission of all our trespasses. A full discharge, therefore, was in and by Christ received of God of all our sins *before He rose from the dead*, as his resurrection truly declared, for He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25).*

Nor doth this doctrine hinder or forestall the doctrine of regeneration or conversion; nay, it lays a foundation for it, for by this doctrine we gather assurance that Christ will have his own; for if already they live in their Head, what is that but a pledge that they shall live in their persons with Him? and consequently that to that end they shall, in the times allotted for that end, be called to a state of faith, which God has ordained shall precede and go before their personal enjoyment of glory.

Nor doth this hinder their partaking of the symbol of regeneration, and of their other privileges to which they are called in the

* Bunyan evidently took the same view of this text (Rom. iv. 25) as that advocated in an able sermon by Bishop Horsley; who points out that the strict grammatical rendering of the original and also the parallelism of the two clauses, necessitate our understanding the passage thus: as our offences were the cause of Christ's being delivered to death, so our justification (effected by that death, Rom. v. 9) was the cause of his being raised.

day of grace; yea, it lays a foundation for all these things: for if I am dead with Christ, let me be like one dead with Him, even to all things to which Christ died when He hanged on the tree—and then He died to sin, to the law, and to the rudiments of this world.

And if I be risen with Christ, let me live like one born from the dead, in newness of life, and having my mind and affections on the things where Christ now sitteth on the right hand of God.

And indeed, he professes in vain that talketh of these things and careth not to have them also answered in himself. This was the apostle's way, namely, "to covet to know Him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death."

And when we are thus, "that thing is true both in Him and us;" then as is the heavenly such are they that are heavenly, for "he that saith he abideth in Him (and, by being in Him, a partaker of these privileges by Him) ought himself so to walk even as He walked."

THE BELIEVER'S STANDING AND WALK.

"Ye in me, and I in you."—John xiv. 20.

THERE is one side of truth which is much lost sight of in these days; for while the full, rich grace of our God, in his kindness to us through Christ Jesus our Lord, is most blessedly set forth, the *result* of that grace, manifested in a holy, devoted walk, is but little thought of. It is indeed true that the believer in Christ Jesus is not only justified from all things, but so thoroughly accepted in the Beloved, that he stands before God arrayed in all his spotless righteousness, perfect as He is perfect, the meekness, beauty, grace and holiness of our blessed Lord all counted as his own; and we are so one with Him that all that Christ *deserves* belongs to us, and the rich

fulness of our Father's love flows forth in one unhindered, never-ceasing stream.

Thus do we stand complete in Christ; the holiness of God is fully met. He sees us perfect in his Son, and therefore says, "I have not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor seen perverseness in Israel." No failure on our part can *alter* this. The precious blood atones for every sin, and Christ our Advocate and Priest maintains our cause, and keeps us without spot before our God. The way into the holiest is never closed, but Jesus is ever waiting to bring us near to God, and lead us into that holy, heavenly fellowship which He has called us to enjoy.

But then it is not only "ye in me," but also "I in you," for in our daily walk it *should* be CHRIST IN US; Christ living, ruling, acting, speaking; *Christ in us* as our strength to keep all evil down, and make us hate each evil thing; *Christ in us* as our wisdom, to guide us through the snares and dangers which beset our path; *Christ in us* as our LORD, to be obeyed, and loved, and followed; our ears attend to hear his voice, and hearts resolved to know no will but his; *Christ in us* as the power of fruitfulness, we hanging upon Him in helpless weakness, and hourly looking up to Him to overcome each sin, and bring each thought and feeling into obedience to Himself. Thus would the life of Christ be manifested in these our mortal bodies, and He be glorified in us, while we should learn most precious lessons at his feet, and get our hearts enlarged, and rendered capable of closer fellowship with Him.

If we consider our position in this world, we shall plainly see that this is our Father's object in leaving us here awhile, instead of taking us at once to Himself. When a poor, guilty, self-convicted sinner is drawn to the Lord Jesus, and receives life and pardon from Him, he is straightway delivered from the power of darkness and

translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, cleansed from every sin, brought into the family of God as a son and heir, yea, a joint heir with Christ, indwelt by the Holy Ghost, and made a partaker of the Divine nature. Thus new-created in Christ Jesus, this once rebellious sinner is made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. This is no *gradual* work, but the free and unmerited gift of God, through the Lord Jesus Christ; the salvation purchased by his precious blood, and freely and *instantly* given to every poor sinner that is taught of God to give up all his own righteousness as filthy rags, and trust simply and entirely in the finished work of Christ.

Thus we are accepted in the Beloved and stand complete in Him; all our sins, failures, and infirmities blotted out for ever, and we without spot or blemish before the throne of God. Then *why* are we left in this world? *why* left in this body of sin, and called to struggle with so much evil both within and without? Oh, is it not that we might use this little while to show forth the virtues of Christ?—that here, in the midst of wickedness, we might follow in his steps, and be living epistles, known and read of all men? Is it not, as we have seen before, that the life of Christ should be manifested in these our *mortal* bodies, and glory, honour, and praise be brought to Him, by the evident proofs that it is no more we who live, but Christ who lives in us?—the flesh subdued, all anger, pride, and selfishness cast down, and we the meek and lowly ones, adorned with every precious fruit of holiness and love? and thus would Christ be *seen* in us, and He, our Lord, our Life, our All, would have his rightful place within our hearts.

This, surely, is *his* desire concerning us, and shall *we* be satisfied with anything short of it? Oh, shall we dare to abuse this wondrous grace, or make it an excuse for sin? Shall we be content to be complete in Him, and

careless as to how we represent Him here? No, no, but rather cry to Him to use this precious truth to bring us captive at his feet, to yield ourselves to Him, that He might reign without a rival in our hearts, and work in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Then would his words be truly fulfilled, "ye in me, and I in you," and who can tell the joy and blessing which would flow from Him to us!

But you may say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" O listen to our Father's words, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness." Then let us shut to our door, and be more in the sanctuary *alone* with Him; there let us sit low at our Saviour's feet, and listen to his voice while He reveals to us the deep evil which is hidden in our hearts, and also shows us his own amazing love and perfect holiness. *All strength* is treasured up for us in Christ, and as we get more fellowship with Him that strength will flow into our souls, and we, fitted out of his fulness, would become vessels of honour, filled and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

May the Lord, in his grace, press these truths upon our hearts, and make us not only hearers but also doers of his Word, for his blessed name's sake. Amen. * * * *

CONFESSING CHRIST.

TO those who have passed from death unto life I come to-day with this message from my Master; Follow the Lord! follow Him wholly—follow Him by a holy life, confess Him boldly, in the world, before all men! You know how the Lord insists on this duty, how He speaks to those fearful hearts who do not dare confess Him openly. He says to them that if they deny Him before their fellow-mortals, those worms

of earth, He will deny them before the angels in his glory. If you are professing to be a Christian you must profess Christ everywhere, not by casting pearls before swine, but in living to his glory, in your private life, in your public life, at your desk, in your workshop, at your fireside, before your wife, your children, your servants, not by throwing the holy salt as it were in great blocks or heaps, but sowing it everywhere in precious grains which shall permeate and vivify all around. How great is the danger of one who calls himself a Christian and yet who does not lead a holy life, a life of constant communion with God. He confesses Christ in the assembly, he denies Him at home; he confesses Him at the communion table, he denies Him in the midst of his family; he confesses Him on special occasions, he denies Him habitually. How different is such a life from that of one who abides in Christ! Such a life is like the living sap which continually rising from the vine flows to the branches, and makes them bring forth leaves, flowers, and fruit. When this sap stops, the branch becomes barren and withers away. O may the Lord make each one of us abiding branches in this living vine, bending under the abundance of the fruits brought forth by his grace.

Were there ever times more favourable than the present for confessing the Lord? How many souls in this country, in this town, who are desiring to find the light, and who are longing after a holy life? Does not the Lord seem to have reserved special blessings for these days? Oh, confess Him, confess Him boldly. He calls us with love, with earnestness. He calls every minister, every father, yea, every one, the most humble, the most insignificant, to confess Him. We read in Dan. iii. of three men who had not all the instruction that we have, but who had the knowledge of the living God. They were in a high position, but they counted that as nothing when in order to preserve it they must have been unfaithful to their Lord. They were ready to sacrifice all, their earthly prospects, their honours, their fortune, and life itself, rather than deny their Master. Alas! are there not Christians who are instructed from their childhood in the knowledge of the truth, and more enlightened than Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, yet who would rather deny their Master than risk their position and earthly prospects. Is there not here a young man

or a young woman who is afraid to confess their Lord, even in their own narrow circle, for fear of the sarcasms, the ironical smile, of a few friends, as if religion consisted only in confessing Christ on Sunday in church, or in a few forms of worship? Whoever acts thus is in fearful danger.

What should we say of a drunkard, a thief, or a murderer, who while perishing in his crimes, should make a profession that he were leading a respectable life? And are we not acting in the same way if we pretend to belong to the Lord Jesus without confessing Him? Surely we are, and thus we deny Him and we crucify Him afresh. The adversary knows all this and rejoices. It is not preaching, it is not religious services, it is not meetings such as these that Satan most fears, but it is the individual testimony of those who, having received the gospel in their own hearts, spread it from one to another in the midst of their family and of their neighbours. He knows that if the apostles, even if thousands of apostles, should be raised up again in the midst of us, unless they were surrounded by a multitude of disciples spreading their words and their faith, comparatively few would hear the gospel.

Who is there among us who has not often yielded to this fear and to this cowardice? Who has not himself been more or less an obstacle to the accomplishment of that prayer which we repeat every day, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done"? Yes; we ourselves by our unfaithfulness hinder the work of the Lord. I am speaking now to Christians. We are stumbling-blocks to others when we fear openly to confess our Lord. We say, "Thy kingdom come, but not at the cost of our own ease, our own glory, or our own fortune." We say, "Thy will be done," and we refuse to accomplish that will, by remaining dumb when it calls upon us to testify for Him. But the Lord can give strength and victory. May He to-day give us the power to serve Him! May He teach us to confess Him boldly, to win souls for Him. He alone can give power to our words; the disciples who tried to cast out devils without the Spirit of Jesus tried in vain.—*From an Address by Reginald Radcliffe, Esq., at Paris.*

THE KINGDOM OF GOD ILLUSTRATED BY THE
GROWING CORN.—(MARK IV. 26—29.)

THE Kingdom of God finds its similitude again and again in nature. This is made especially apparent in our Lord's teaching. He generally drew forth his parables thence. He taught the multitudes (or "them that are without," Mark iv. 11) in parables. He thus and thus only spoke to them of the things *within* God's kingdom. They were unprepared to receive those things which can be only spiritually discerned. As the apostle, therefore, on one occasion appealed to natural instinct, so the Saviour appealed to the handiworks of God, virtually saying to the people, "Doth not Nature itself teach you?" It is indeed the same God who displays his wonders in nature as in grace. His outward works bear their testimony, and speak aloud to him who has an ear to hear; and yet that testimony is unheeded and unperceived, except when, in the spirit of humility and meekness, it is listened to; and thus the Lord was at once concealing and opening out the truth when He spoke in parables. To God's kingdom, of course, his teaching referred. It can be seen and entered only by him who receives it as a little child; to him only are its mysteries and joys disclosed. Let those *without*, therefore, learn *where they are*, their need of entering in, and *that* by faith in Him who raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead; then shall their eyes be opened to see, and their ears to hear. Be it ours, beloved reader, humbly to seek in very deed the opened ear, that we may hear and apprehend a little of what the Saviour could open to us in the parable before us. May we thence derive solid comfort, and may instruction be ministered to our souls.

The kingdom of God has its progressive stages of devel-

opment. On what do these depend? Nature furnishes a reply. For "so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how; for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself." Here man is impotent. The seed is cast into the ground, and for a time his care may be to protect it from the fowls of the air or from being rooted up and wasted by ravenous beasts; but its growth depends not on any power of his. The vital principle is in the seed itself; the power of God alone causes it to spring up and grow. Man sleeps and rises; night and day, darkness and light, succeed each other; meanwhile the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself. For in the beginning God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so." And it is so yet, and it shall continue to be so to the end. And so also is the kingdom of God. Its progress and development are ensured by the mighty power of God, and result entirely from his faithfulness and goodness and mercy. It has its own vital energy also within itself, and, as a seed, springs and grows up, man knows not how. Between the beginning and the end, as between the seed-time and harvest, scenes of darkness and light intervene, and man spiritually now sleeps and now wakes. But the result is from God, and the triumphs and the glories of his kingdom are sure. This is the confidence and the sure hope of him who in spirit prays, "Thy kingdom come." His faith finds its anchor and support here.

But we may ask, What and where is God's kingdom, which finds its similitude in the growing corn? As to what it is, the reply is obvious. It is the sphere within which God exercises authority and rule, and where all things work and move and act in harmony with his will.

If, too, after the manner of a seed, it springs and grows up, the scene of its growth and development must obviously be in the heart (Mark iv. 15). And so says the Saviour, "The kingdom of God is within you." There it takes its rise; there it manifests its growing, widening power till at length all resistance, all strife—all, in short, that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ, shall be subdued, and righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost shall prevail. This is the all-important view of the subject which immediately and directly concerns those who, as disciples, seek to follow Him who is "the way, the truth, and the life." True, prophecy announces the extension and outward manifestation of God's kingdom on the earth. The anticipation is exhilarating and joyous. Wars and strifes shall cease. Contention, discord, selfish emulation—themselves the fruit of pride, ambition, and the lust of wealth and power—shall give place to peace and concord and love. The divine dispensations which have been running their course—each showing forth, after its own distinctive mode, the wonders and the riches of God's grace—have been and are preparing the way for this further display of Divine love. Changes—sorrowful or joyous, as it may be—crises even fearful and portentous—may yet await mankind; but as the seed-corn ripens into the matured harvest, so shall the past ways and works of God result in the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of God and of his Christ. But then, as now and ever, the kingdom of God must be within. The present dispensation opens out to those enlightened and instructed in the ways of God, mysteries hidden from ages and from generations, in the high and distinctive position to which the Church of God is called. But such a peculiar display of God's love and grace can only be where his kingdom is triumphant; and that kingdom is not an external power acting from without, but is within us. It is Christ within.

His incarnation, sufferings, death, and resurrection, took place, that God's kingdom should be thus unfolded, established, and perfected in our souls. We want this kingdom to be within us. We cannot be happy, we cannot have peace or rest or joy otherwise. And, in a word, the religion of Jesus Christ is not a theory nor a national creed, but the kingdom of God within us; and yet can it be, that in hearts like ours—the gross, the impure, the vain—the selfish, in thought and feeling and aim, is thus overcome, and all is softened and blended in love at once heavenly and pure, that works only in unison with the will of God? And is it here on earth, too, that that kingdom begins, and as a seed, springs and grows up? Yes; for thus God's love breaks in upon the darkness in which sin has enshrouded us, that through faith in the Lord Jesus, we may be spiritually raised up with Christ into newness of life, and that we may see light in God's light. Oh, it is a soul-engrossing thought that, in hearts like ours, God is bringing that which was without form and void into substance and form, and that there, where passions, evil and gross, have been so long triumphant, He is working out the good pleasure of his will, that righteousness and peace and holy joy may be for ever ours! Oh, who can withhold the prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in me, as it is done in heaven"?

But as to the coming of this kingdom Nature herself teaches us; so our Lord says, "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." And so is the kingdom of God. Its developments are progressive: it is gradually and, it may be, imperceptibly unfolded, yet is it never stationary in its process of development. It is as a seed whose vital power and energy are in itself. The earth brings forth of herself, independent of man's aid. As she waits to receive the requisite moisture and heat from the

atmosphere and the heavens above, so the soul must continually wait on God in faith and prayer, and the divine principle then and thus of itself springs and grows up. There *must*, of course, be the waiting and the prayer, and then there will be the growth and progress of the true life within. It is of God in such a case, and therefore sure. But there are stages in the development, and the progress may be more or less slow, though sure.

The blade comes first in the seed-corn: and so is also the kingdom of God. It is but the blade at first—a feeble germ, yet in its feeblest state it gives evidence of life, and promise of matured fruit. The day of small things in God's kingdom is not to be despised. The same sun shines upon the tender blade as upon the opening ear of corn, and the life is in itself. When the blades of corn appear, the ground is fully occupied, and yet the earth is seen. The blade, too, differs in appearance but little from the grass: only those experienced in such things could say confidently that it is corn. And grass is emblematical of flesh, for, says the prophet, "all flesh is grass." And in the young Christian the kingdom of God is but partially developed; there is much that as yet seems of the earth, earthy: even that which is of God is seen as yet under a carnal form. But there is the germ of life: nights and days must intervene whilst men patiently await the time of harvest, but the little blade gives promise of fruit.

In due time comes the ear: you can now distinctly name it; you can say it is bread-corn. And there is a stage, too; when, as to the divine life within, you can say, "This is all of grace and not nature." In the ear there is the distinct form of the bread-corn, though as yet there is no real fruit: and still nights and days, darkness and light, succeed each other, and still man is powerless to bring forth fruit unto perfection. It still grows and ripens, he knows not how. He *waits* for the time of har-

vest; for the seed has yet the life and energy in itself: the power of God alone can bring it to perfection. And so also is the kingdom of God. Man must still wait, and wait in faith and prayer; and as he sleeps and rises, night and day, the ear fills and the corn ripens: the harvest hastens on.

At length comes the full corn in the ear, and the harvest has arrived. The greenness and grassiness are gone; the stem that bore the fruit dies, for the corn is ripe. It is even so in the kingdom of God. The flesh, which is grass, withereth; the flower fadeth: but that which is of the Word of our God remaineth. In this, the third stage, Christ is known in the power of his resurrection: fruit is gathered unto eternal life. It is the time of the spiritual harvest; the kingdom of God is come. But eye has not seen, nor ear heard; it has not entered the heart of man, what things God has prepared for them that love Him. Enough is it to know that grace and love are triumphant. Our God must work all our works in us, and perfect that which concerns us. For so is the kingdom of God.

WM. HUGILL.

WORLDLY THOUGHTS IN PRAYER CONDEMNED.—There is a story, how that one offered his horse to his fellow, upon condition he would but say the Lord's prayer, and think upon nothing but God. The proffer was accepted, and he began, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." "But I must have a bridle too," said he. "No, nor the horse neither," said the other, "for thou hast lost both already." And thus it is that too many, in both private and public addresses to God, are, by the suggestions of Sathan, walking with St. Hierom in the galleries of Rome, having their hearts roving after pleasures of sin, their thoughts taken up with the things of this world, and their whole man set upon vanity; whereas, they should rather mind that which they are about, keep close to God, and be so watchfull and intentive over their souls, that their hearts and tongues may go comfortably together. For the outward work only, is but like the loathsome smoke of Sodom, whereas, the inward devotion of the heart is not unfitly compared to the pleasant perfume of the sweetest frankincense.—*Spencer.*

"HE MAY RUN THAT READETH IT."



UCH—and not "He that runs may read"—are the words of the so frequently misquoted passage, Habakkuk ii. 2.

It seems generally taken for granted that the meaning of the passage *ought* to be, Make the vision so plain upon tables that a man running by may read it without discontinuing his running.

In order, then, to accommodate the words to this *supposed* sense, they are altered, and, instead of the text as we find it, "Make it plain upon tables, *that he may run that readeth it,*" it is commonly quoted thus, "That he that runs may read."

Perhaps one cause of this popular misquotation is the common misconception as to the nature of the "tables" spoken of.

Although, it is true, the word is the same used of the tables of stone on which the law was written, yet it also signified writing-tablets, such as were used by the ancients, made of wood and covered with wax, and thus written on as one might write in a book.

In this sense we find the word used in Isa. xxx. 8: "Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book. . . ."

What was written in a book of this kind could hardly be read by a person running by, however plainly written; nor is it likely that a command to make such writing very legible would be couched in the terms *that the reader may run*, when it might be expressed so much more simply (were such the sense intended) by *that the runner may read*.

If we take the words as we find them, two meanings suggest themselves. One that which Gesenius adopts, and which his authority as a Hebrew scholar renders worthy

of attention. He takes "run" metaphorically, as we do in speaking of a person running on so fast in reading; he, therefore, understands it thus—that he who reads may read quickly. But this makes the meaning very pointless. The other is to take "run" in the gospel sense of "fleeing from the wrath to come," "flying for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." In this sense the subject of the vision which follows in the 4th verse, and which is, in fact, the grand Old Testament revelation of the gospel—"The just shall live by faith"—is made known, that those who read it may at once fly to the refuge provided.

What a solemn rebuke does this view of the passage convey to those who count faith a mere intellectual assent to certain truths—a sitting still, with folded hands; as if it were safe to stay in the City of Destruction, and believe oneself to be in the City of God. Be it remembered that it was not to Israel *in Egypt*, but at the Red Sea, that God said, "Stand still, and see the salvation of God;" nor was it in contrast to his people flying for refuge to Him, but rather in reference to their going down into Egypt to trust in the shadow of Egypt, that the Lord said concerning them, in Isaiah xxx. 7, "Their strength is to sit still." The glorious gospel doctrine, "The just shall live by faith," or, "The just by faith shall live," is made plain, that he who reads it *may run*. But whither shall he run? "Come unto *me* (saith Jesus), . . . and I will give you rest." "This man receiveth sinners," but to those who read and do not run, it may even now be said, "Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life."

It is interesting to observe that the word used by the LXX. for "*run*," is the same which Paul uses in Phil. iii. 12—"I *follow after*," also in ver. 14, "I *press toward* the mark." "So run, that ye may obtain." H. E. B.

THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST AS THE SHEPHERD.

"I am the good Shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—John x. 11.

"The God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."—Heb. xiii. 20.

"When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."—1 Pet. v. 4.

HHE "Good Shepherd" in John x. 11 is distinguished from all other good shepherds, they keep the sheep for their own personal advantage, and destroy the sheep that they might live; but the Good Shepherd takes them only for their own good, and He kills Himself that they might live. Other shepherds deprive the sheep of their fleeces, in order to clothe the shepherds; but He works out a covering for the sheep, and He clothes them with the robe He weaves (Pss. xlv.; xxii.).

The "Great Shepherd" of Heb. xiii. 20 was great in resurrection power, hence powerful as the conqueror of death, "He was dead and is alive again," and He "ever liveth to make intercession for us." He has triumphed over death and burst the tomb, and now, as the conqueror of death, He is at the head of the sheep, leading them on to victory. They are only sheep, and not one of them can fight the "lion" that "goeth about seeking whom he may devour;" but their Captain has done it already, and He is now the mighty risen Shepherd who "never slumbereth nor sleepeth," and He is leading his believing flock as in Psalm xxiii.

The third shepherd is the "Chief Shepherd," who has yet to appear, as in 1 Pet. v. 4. He will be at the fold to receive all the flock from the hands of the various small shepherds who shall meet Him in the air with their little bands, their "hope, joy, and crown of rejoicing," as in 1 Thess. ii. 19. The Chief Shepherd has not yet appeared; are you ready for Him?

Lord, purify me and all thy church, and make us all willing and obedient and rejoicing at the thought that we flee from the hireling, that we have been redeemed by the Good Shepherd,

raised with the Great Shepherd, and are waiting for the Chief Shepherd, who has not yet appeared. "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

The 22nd Psalm gives to us the Good Shepherd, the 23rd Psalm gives to us the Great Shepherd, and the 24th Psalm gives to us the Chief Shepherd; "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in."

GORDON FORLONG.

MY AIN COUNTREE.

I AM far frae my hame, an' I'm weary oftenwhiles
For the langed for hame-bringing, an' my Father's welcome smiles;
I'll ne'er be fu' content, until my een do see
The gowden gates o' Heaven, an' my ain countree.

The earth is flecked wi' flow'rs, mony-tinted, fresh, an' gay,
The birdies warble blithely, for my Father made them see;
But these sights an' these soun's will as naething be to me,
When I hear the angels singing in my ain countree.

I've his gude word of promise, that some gladsome day the King
To his ain royal palace his banished hame will bring:
Wi' een an' wi' hearts running owre we shall see
"The King in his beauty," an' our ain countree.

My sins hae been mony, an' my sorrows hae been sair,
But there they'll never vex me, nor be remembered mair:
His bluid hath made me white, *his* hand shall dry mine ee,
When He brings me hame at last to my ain countree.

Like a bairn to its mither, a wee birdie to its nest,
I wad fain be gangin' noo unto my Saviour's breast;
For He gathers in his bosom witless, worthless lambs like me,
An' carries them himsel' to his ain countree.

He's faithfu' that hath promised, He'll surely come again;
He'll keep his tryst wi' me, at what hour I dinna ken,
But He bids me still to watch, an' ready aye to be
To gang at ony moment to my ain countree.

So I'm watching aye an' singing o' my hame as I wait,
For the soun'ing o' his footfa' this side the gowden gate.
God gie his grace to ilk ane wha listens noo to me,
That we may a' gang in gladness to our ain countree.

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—V.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"Again the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples. And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone."—John i. 35—42.

THERE is a peculiar interest attaching itself to little things which form the original spring or slender beginning of great results. The small acorn dropped into the earth, or the first sprout from it above the sod, which grows at length into the strong mountain-oak; the fountain beneath the rock, or the tiny rivulet issuing thence which swells at last into the mighty river, may be taken as instances among material objects. Of a different class, but not less interesting to trace, are such as these: the first thoughts out of which has grown some profound treatise; the boyish musings of some mind which, in its maturity, has dazzled the world with the light of genius; the first struggles of an ultimately prosperous career, in the life of an individual or a nation. Apart from claims on our interest arising from other causes, what a charm there is about Eden as the cradle-land of the human race! We feel the charm somewhat renewed when we stand with Noah and his family beside the altar of sacrifice on Ararat; and, perhaps, we hang over the history of the

Jewish people at no stage more delightedly than when we follow their national father from the country of his nativity, and see him become a sojourner and wanderer in the land of promise.

The foregoing passage of our Gospel is invested with an interest of this nature. We have in it an account of the first formal acknowledgment of Jesus by believing disciples. The Great Teacher begins here his work of instruction; the Founder of the church brings together the first stones of the sacred edifice. The dayspring from on high has risen, and here we are told of the first few who hail the dawning light. In the attraction to Christ's side of Andrew, and that other disciple, and Peter, we see the first little beginning of the predicted drawing of "all men," the commencement of that mighty work which is to be effected by the publication of the gospel of peace. We have before us the first meeting of two and three of the earliest soldiers of that white-robed army which is destined to subjugate the earth. We do not mean, however, that there were at this time no others who recognized Jesus as the promised Comer; nor that till now there had been none who confessed Him as the Messiah. He was so confessed in his infancy by those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. We simply intend that here we first meet with the Saviour in the character of a Teacher, beginning to attract and instruct disciples, and that here we have recorded his first interview with some of those followers to whom He afterwards gave his great commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

The date of the occurrence related in the paragraph before us is again marked by the phrase, "the next day." It was the day following that on which, in the hearing of many, John had said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." It was the third day

inclusively from the date of his interview with the legates from Jerusalem. On this day John was standing, near the spot, as we infer, which he occupied the day before; but not on this occasion surrounded, as formerly, by a general audience. Two only of his disciples were beside him—two, not of ordinary hearers, nor of such as had merely submitted to his baptism; but of those who had attached themselves more closely to his person and waited on his more private and intimate instructions. Why there were no others with John at this time, whether it was the hour of the day, or some other circumstance, which occasioned his comparative solitude, it is of little importance to conjecture. But, whether speaking to the multitude, or addressing a few, John's great aim now is to point out the Messiah, to direct his followers to that Greater than himself who had at length appeared. So observing Jesus passing along within view of where he and his two followers stood, he said to them, in the words he had employed yesterday in the hearing of others, "Behold the Lamb of God!" It is not necessary, perhaps, to suppose these to be the only words he spoke. But if they were it is not difficult to see a reason why he did not add as before, "who taketh away the [sin of the world." The two disciples, not improbably, heard those other words yesterday. But, besides, John was the day before addressing a promiscuous audience. The circumstances are different now. He is not preaching the gospel to unconverted sinners; he is speaking to two of his own disciples, who were undoubtedly devout men, "waiting for the consolation of Israel," believers already in the Hope promised to the fathers. For the Lamb of God they looked, though with very imperfect and clouded intelligence of his character. It is enough, therefore, that their master say to them, "Behold Him, for whom ye wait." Or, perhaps, we should rather say, in this personal dealing with individuals, the Baptist

would not interfere with application of his word to themselves by a statement of the general truth, however sure and grand. He will not say, "Behold the Lamb of God for man." He will rather say, "Behold the Lamb—for you." While thus commanding the attentive regard of his followers to his Lord and theirs, John, we are told, was himself intently and fondly gazing on his honoured Master. The phrase "looking upon" imports a steadfast eyeing—a fixed and earnest look. Undoubtedly it was a look expressive at once of affection, admiration, gratitude, and adoring delight. John felt as Simeon did when he said, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." It was, indeed, a vision to amaze and attract equally—this "Jesus as he walked." That man whose feet now tread the sands around Jordan is none other than the Word Incarnate—Eternal Life dwelling in humanity—Infinite Love clothed with the veil of flesh to give itself expression for the salvation of sinners.

We are not told of any special effect resulting from John's testimony on the day preceding. We may infer that as he said, "Behold the Lamb of God," his hearers turned their eyes to Jesus; but we read of none that sought converse with Him. He went home, it may be, solitary and unfollowed. But to-day the same words fall on the ears of the two that listened with moving power. Their master did not bid them follow Christ; he simply said, "See Him." But, believing John's witness, and knowing that the Hope of Israel was before them, a sweet and potent impulse within constrained them to desire his fellowship. Gladly, no doubt, the Baptist saw them following, for to secure results like this was the grand object of his ministry. He came to bear witness to the Light, that all might believe. It was his function, and his delight, to lead the people to their Saviour. This, his joy, therefore, was now beginning to be fulfilled.

We learn in a subsequent verse that one of the two disciples was Andrew, the brother of Peter. It is almost certain that the other was John, the writer of this Gospel. It is his habit not to name himself, but to use some general descriptive phrase; when we find him introduced into the narrative, he is "another disciple," or "the disciple whom Jesus loved." On the other hand, it is difficult to conceive a reason why this second disciple, alone of all the five mentioned in this chapter, should not be indicated by name, unless he was John himself. We may quite safely conclude, therefore, that the evangelist who tells the story was Andrew's companion on this occasion, and it is illustrative of John's amiability and modesty that he assigns to his fellow-disciple so prominent a place. It lends fresh interest, moreover, to the account of the incident before us, that the Spirit has employed in recording it, an eye-witness of the whole.

When seen by the Baptist and his disciples, Jesus must have been receding from the place where they stood, though probably in a transverse direction, for we are told that they followed Him. As they came up behind, the Saviour turned and looked on them; and the word used indicates his looking with satisfaction and pleasure. This feeling is further indicated by the fact of his not waiting to be accosted, but opening the conversation Himself. By putting the question, "What seek ye?" He gave the two that opportunity so welcome to inferiors approaching a higher presence, not knowing well otherwise how to begin their story, of telling at once in their answer the object they sought. Now, we partly see in that answer what were their present views of Jesus. Two things we find in it evidently. They have, first, a believing esteem of Him. They call Him Rabbi, a title of respect commonly given to religious teachers, here interpreted Master, in the sense of Instructor—one that has disciples. And they have, next,

a desire for fellowship with Him, more leisurely and uninterrupted than the open way permitted. Their inquiry, "Where dwellest Thou?" was not dictated by idle curiosity. It was, in germ, the inquiry of the church in the Song, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon, for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions."

The reply of our Lord is in keeping with all we find recorded afterwards of his readiness to instruct every humble inquirer after celestial wisdom. Neither ashamed of his lowly dwelling (such it doubtless was) nor impatient of obtrusion on his privacy, He answered with prompt and affable invitation: "Come and see." The two readily accompanied Him, at his word; and, reaching his dwelling, not, we may be sure, without gracious welcome, prolonged their stay with Him during the remainder of the day. It was about the tenth hour—two or three from sunset, according to Jewish computation, which is probably to be understood, though the Roman mode of reckoning, corresponding to our own, has been preferred by some. Till sunset, in any case, or, haply, beyond it, Andrew and John lingered with their Lord. How the time was spent, we are not told, but may easily imagine: many questions the disciples put, and had kindly answered; and, we doubt not, they departed wondering at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. That house was for the time, indeed, a Bethel, a scene of tuition more interesting than the classic retreat of ancient philosophers. Poetry has celebrated "the low-roofed cot" of Socrates, and spoken of wisdom as "from heaven descended" there; but here celestial wisdom is indeed come down from heaven, and beneath a humble roof unfolds a knowledge far beyond the sublimest speculations of the Grecian sage—knowledge sure, holy, saving, divine.

When the two disciples left the presence of their Lord, they went, at first, only to return with another. They seem to have gone directly in quest of Simon (called Peter in verse 40, by way of anticipation). The words, "He first findeth his own brother Simon," curiously suggest this conclusion. The "first" is joined with Andrew, not with Peter. The meaning is, not that Peter was first found, but that Andrew first found him. Probably, therefore, on leaving the Saviour's presence both disciples went to seek Simon; but his own brother was the first to discover him. Be this as it may, it was with an exulting heart that Andrew greeted his brother with the glad news: "We have found the Messiah,"—interpreted, Christ—both words, as is well known, signifying the Anointed One. By that name Jesus is pointed out as the sole Mediator and Priest of his people, appointed of the Father, qualified by the rich unction of the Holy Ghost, and prefigured by the anointed priests, prophets, and kings of the old economy. That Andrew should at once break out into the exclamation, "We have found Him," shows his own heart full of the discovery, and proves that both Peter and himself had been looking and waiting for Him. Students of their Bibles, and believers of the Baptist's witness, they expected his appearance, and now He is here. Observe the strength of Andrew's faith, and how grace wrought in this confession. The two disciples had sought no miracle from Jesus' hand for confirmation; his words have penetrated and won their hearts, and, like the woman of Samaria afterwards, when she said, not in doubt, but faith, "Is not this the Christ?" they know and acknowledge their Lord.

Simon, like his brother and that other, was, doubtless, a disciple of John the Baptist. Called by Andrew's joyous message, he gladly accompanied the two back to the presence of their new Master. As he entered the house, Jesus

eyed him earnestly. The word is the same as in verse 36, and conveys a similarly emphatic meaning. Jesus, looking on Peter, penetrates his soul to a perception of his noble and intrepid disposition, glances down into the future, knowing what his grace would make this foremost of his apostles (Matthew x. 2), and thus addresses him: "Thou art Simon the son of Jonas: thou shalt be called Cephas" (that is, says the evangelist, Peter, both words meaning a stone). "Thou art," "thou shalt be"; observe the contrast. This "Simon Barjona" comes out again repeatedly: when Peter made his blessed confession, and when, after his fall, the Lord would lift him up again. On all these three occasions, Peter's name and family are brought up, to put what he was in opposition to what Christ raised him to be. Our Lord's words here furnished evidence to Simon that Jesus knew him, and must be a prophet; but they conveyed to him, also, a token of special favour. That new name was a mark of advancement—as when Abram of old became Abraham, and Jacob was changed to Israel. The meaning of the name, moreover, indicated Christ's estimate of Peter's character, partly as already seen, and partly as to be unfolded hereafter. There was something noble, we almost conclude, in Peter's aspect; surely something heroic within. The Saviour appears to have looked upon him with complacent regard, and to have designed by these words a peculiarly cordial welcome. Yet Matthew lets us know what, after all, made Simon truly Peter. It was that knowledge of his Master as the Christ the Son of the living God, which was not revealed to him by flesh and blood, but by the Father. When that knowledge was brought out in open confession, Jesus said to him, "Thou art Peter," as if to say, Now thou deservest that name I gave thee when first thou wast brought to me. We incline to think that Peter, first of all the apostles, clearly saw in his Lord the Divine SON. Might not this be the explanation

of his conduct on occasion of the first miraculous draught of fishes on the Lake of Galilee? He learned the great truth, at least, not from man, but by revelation from God, and the lesson made him Peter.

Looking back on this story of what some one has interestingly called "A day with Jesus," such reflections as these arise. The public testimony of preaching should be seconded by private appeal. Say to the multitude, say also to the two and to the one, "Behold the Lamb of God." It is a pertinent and useful inquiry to worshippers in God's house, "What seek ye?" What are ye after to-day, ye that go up to the courts of Zion? Have you an object, and what is it?—Every minister's house should be open to inquirers about soul concerns. On such errands all should be always welcome.—See in Andrew the prototype of home missionaries. Let us teach every man his neighbour and his brother, saying, "Know the Lord."—With this pleasant thought we close. The Christian life is a following Christ home. "Where dwellest Thou?" says the longing soul, travelling onwards. "Come and see," says the gracious Saviour, calling it forward. At length death opens the door, and the welcome follower shall abide with his Lord all that day which has no succeeding night.

JUSTIFICATION.—How then doth the soul reach after Christ in the act of justifying? Even as a man fallen into a river, and like to be drowned, as he is carried down by the flood, espies the bough of a tree hanging over the river, which he catches at and clings unto with all his might to save him; and seeing no other way of succour but that, ventures his life upon it. This man, so soon as he had fastened upon this bough, is in a safe condition, though all troubles, fears, and terrors are not presently out of his mind, until he comes to himself, and sees himself quite out of danger. Then he is sure he is safe, but he was safe before he was sure.—*Archbishop Usher.*

GOD OUR PORTION.

 WRITTEN TO A YOUNG BELIEVER.

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." —Phil. iii. 10—12.

WHERE believers are doubting, scarcely knowing what "grace" means, we cannot too fully or too frequently insist on the privileges they possess in Christ, in whom they stand "accepted" and "complete"; but when souls are brought to this point, then is the time to lead them on still further. With a view to help you here I will, by the Lord's help, try and say a few words which, if they do not add to your knowledge, may, by His blessing, tend to stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance.

Allow me, then, to call to your remembrance what is the believer's *portion* (not *position*) in Christ. It is, as you know, Christ's own portion. GOD HIMSELF, "Heirs of God and joint heirs *with* Christ." And this is our portion *now*: truly the portion of every child of God from the first moment of its spiritual existence. It is, emphatically, what we are called to, above and beyond whatever blessing may accrue to us through the development of the dispensational *ways* of God. I repeat it, HE, HIMSELF, and not his works nor the fruits of his ways, is that blessed portion to which we are called. It is of immense, and, in one sense, of eternal importance, to understand and realize this; because of the present, practical result, to such as do understand and realize it. But this realization of our portion is not that which first occupies a new-born soul.

To be assured of its acceptance and standing in Christ is, necessarily, the first thing; and when, through grace, this is attained to, the soul is "at leisure from itself," to ascertain and apprehend that for which it has been apprehended by Christ Jesus.

A soul might say, What! I, a creature, attempt to explore the Infinite God? Yes, divine, abounding grace has brought us even to this. God has first given *Himself* as our portion in Christ our Head. Next, He has made us partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4); whereby we obtain needful capacity to enter somewhat into *what* our portion is. Then, He has unfolded Himself to us in the blessed person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was the revealer of the Father (Matt. xi. 27; John i. 18), and whose words and ways, which thus reveal Him, are recorded for our study as the divinely-appointed means whereby the blessed God, our portion, is to be known by us. And, lastly, He has given us the Holy Spirit to dwell in us, not only to be our Comforter and Helper generally while in the wilderness, but *specially* to guide us into truth, and to show us the things of Christ. It is the blessed God that the Holy Ghost desires we should know; but as Christ Jesus the Lord is He who has revealed the Father, it is through "Him" that we must know the Father. Further, Christ and the church are *one*: the Father, in wondrous grace, having bestowed on the church the same love that He had towards Christ; and so Christ and the church have one glory and one eternal inheritance; the Lord having given to his church a share in the glory which the Father has given Him. The church, consequently, stands the elect bride of the Lamb; waiting the good pleasure of God as to the time of her manifestation as the chosen of God for his beloved Son. Oh, does not your heart glow with rapture in anticipation of what is to come? If it does, remember your *portion* is *always* the

same. *Now*, it has to be slowly learnt under the patient teaching and guidance of the Holy Ghost. *Then*, doubtless, when all impediments are gone, we shall much more rapidly learn somewhat of the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of the eternal glory and blessedness of Him who is our eternal portion.

But to return to what I wished to add in connexion with, and as a consequence of, our blessed union with Christ. He is in the glory, we are in the rejection. Hence the additional desires of Phil. iii. 10, and its practical connexion with the subject of this letter. Observe that the blessings of Phil. iii. 10, are designed to be present; but in how many cases is it a living reality? Still, it is the Spirit's desire for all believers; and if this state is not individually attained to, such as come short are not straitened in God. To "know the *power* of his resurrection," which was his entire deliverance out of the first Adam state by the Holy Ghost (1 Pet. iii. 18), that condition of existence in which He who knew no sin was made sin for us—is the direct and necessary result of really knowing "Him." Our standing, or position *in* Him, as saved sinners, may be known and entered into, without our at all entering into what is meant by knowing "*Him*." And if the power of his resurrection is practically known, the fellowship or partnership of his sufferings will necessarily follow; and our being shaped according to the figure or pattern of his death is the closing result *here*. But how is this to be attained? By any alteration of our flesh? No, but by its subjection; and as nature in us *does* not, as, of course, it *cannot*, subject itself; it has to be subjected by another, even by the power of Christ (2 Cor. xii. 9).

The process whereby Christ is learnt, according to this passage, is by the unfolding of God to the spiritual apprehension of the believer; *not* by fresh revelations, but by our

increased apprehension, through the power of the Holy Ghost, of what is *always* before our eyes in the Word and YET IS NOT SEEN. And so we learn God, our blessed portion, by means of apprehending and entering into what is revealed of Him in the Scriptures. And why is it that that precious Word is so largely closed in this respect, even to such as desire to grow in the "knowledge of his will"? Because of the obstacles which exist in us to the working of the Holy Ghost. There are instances, as in conversion, where sovereign grace acts against and independent of our will; but when, through grace, we become God's dear children in Christ, the extent to which our Father unfolds Himself to us, will largely depend, I think, on the desire we have to learn how blessed as well as how vast is our portion in Him. If, therefore, you so far yield to the promptings of the Holy Ghost in you (and assuredly this is ever the direction of his gracious ministry in us), as to allow the desire, to have Phil. iii. 10 as your experience, to find expression in real request for it, it certainly will be the joy of God to unfold Himself to you. The measure of this unfolding of Himself will be regulated by your capacity to receive it (John xvi. 12), while your capacity will really depend, I judge, on the extent to which nature in you is made subject to the will of God; because the opposition of the flesh, in some of its various actings, is the real hindrance to the progressive work of the Holy Ghost in us. Hence what those who desire to know and experience Phil. iii. 10 really want, is to be brought down and kept down, so that the Holy Ghost can work unhindered in us. Then always and in all it will be "not I, but Christ in me," and Phil. iii. 10 will be a daily experience and its blessed results experimentally known. Oh, then, beloved reader, let us press on. To be resting in Christ in the conscious security of his finished work and perfect love is most blessed,

and may well call forth loudest praise; but there is something beyond even this, namely, a growing apprehension of God through an ever-enlarging capacity, the product of the gracious ministry of the Holy Ghost in us to the glory and praise of God. I know through precious grace a little of what I have said; and, blessed be God, He gives me to desire to know more, which He will accomplish in his own time. Only understand what Phil. iii. 10 means and comprises, and be brought sincerely to desire it, and there will be an end of expecting to extract satisfaction from the creature in any form. When a soul lives outside nature in all respects, and seeks its all exclusively in God, eternal blessedness is begun. But for this we must pay the cost (Luke xiv. 25—35, especially ver. 33). On no other condition than that of following in the footsteps of our rejected Lord can this state of blessedness be attained to here. He who tries "to make the best of both worlds" will make no progress in the experimental knowledge of that which the apostle Paul so earnestly followed after.

Remember that the living God, our portion, is greater than his works and better than his gifts; I do not, of course, refer to Him who was the unspeakable Gift; and may He help you to seek your all truly and only in Him, if you have not already done so. As you learn the process by which He answers your prayers for an increasing knowledge of Himself, you will find that what you most need is the removal of obstacles; because, as they are moved out of the way, a portion of the fulness of God will supply their place. With this may you be filled—(Eph. iii. 19).

G. W. G.

THE CROSS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

III.—JOSEPH.

THE narrative of Joseph's life contains no such obvious or definite type of the Cross as do those we have hitherto considered. But the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow are so clearly foreshown in the remarkable career of this most estimable patriarch (of whom nothing but his virtues is recorded) as to forbid our omission of the story.

After a detailed statement of the generations of Esau, occupying an entire chapter (Gen. xxxvi.), the sacred historian says, "These are the generations of Jacob; Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren." No more. As though Joseph, whom the chapter proceeds to describe as his father's beloved, were also his only-begotten; as though the generations of Jacob were summed up in Joseph; as though all that was in Jacob were developed in this his son. Even so, in the only-begotten Son of God, "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" "for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." "No man hath seen God at any time: the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him;" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

The birthright was Joseph's; for Reuben, unstable as water, forfeited his birthright, and it was given to the sons of Joseph; and although Judah prevailed above his brethren and of him came the chief ruler, yet the birthright was Joseph's (1 Chron. v. 1, 2). So also with regard to the first and second Adam: "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth earthy,

the second man is the Lord from heaven." God rested in his work, for all was very good; but Adam, like Reuben, defiled his Father's couch, and the birthright was given to the second Adam; He became the Head of a new creation, for "the first Adam was made a living soul, the second Adam a quickening spirit." "And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."

"Joseph was feeding the flock with his brethren, and Israel loved Joseph more than all his children." So Wisdom, which is but another name for Jesus, says, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before Him, rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men." Because Jacob loved his son so much, he made him a coat of many colours, as a token of his love. And in how many ways did the Father testify his love of Jesus. In that sacred intercourse recorded in the 17th of John, the Son speaks of "the glory which thou hast given me," "the glory which I had with thee before the world was." And from the excellent glory on the holy mount a voice declared, "This is my beloved Son; hear him."

It is not strange that Joseph was hated of his brethren. The darkness always hates the light. Because Joseph brought unto his father their evil report, and still more because his father loved him, they hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him. When the Son of God came into the world in human form, the world hated Him because He testified of it that the works thereof are evil.

"Such is the price which must be paid for light; such the penalty of being faithful beyond the measure of our brethren. Then a coat of many colours is given him, for which his brethren hate him more and more, not seeing that if they too walked in obedience, they also might be adorned like him. But they feel that he is preferred, and

the secret sense of their inferiority, instead of humbling, only enrages them. If we walk with God in truth, and turn from evil, not afraid to rebuke it even among our brethren, a fair robe will soon be put upon us, not only, as in Adam, to hide our shame and nakedness, but to clothe us in 'garments of glory and beauty,' even that 'fine linen which is the righteousness of saints.' The 'many colours' will all be there; for colours are but the various shades and reflections of light; and he who walks in the light must needs reflect it, giving back each ray that is not lost and absorbed. In the priests, the garment was perfect white; and upon the Mount, One was seen 'whose raiment was shining, so as no fuller on earth could whiten it;' but the many colours, if not so heavenly, may better reveal to human eyes the wondrous fulness which there is in light. The Josephs are yet thus adorned, and for this are the more hated by their brethren who are not with Jacob."*

Joseph's dream of government exasperated his brethren still more against him. This, from the hour of Jesus' birth, was the fear of Gentiles as well as Jews. Because He was born King of the Jews, Herod sought the young Child's life, and slew all the children of Bethlehem from two years old and under; and rather than submit to the dominion of the Nazarene, the people of Israel, headed by chief priests and rulers, cried, "We have no king but Cæsar."

When Joseph told his dream, his brethren envied him, but "his father observed the saying." When the shepherds declared the good tidings of great joy to all people, that in the city of David is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, "all wondered; but Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart." And when his parents

* JUKES'S *Types of Genesis*.

sought Him sorrowing, and to their anxious questioning He replied, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" his mother "kept all these sayings and pondered them in her heart." Parallel passages such as these, though apparently of little moment, are of great significance, as showing the relation between the narratives in the Old Testament and in the New.

Joseph dwelt in communion with his father at Hebron, while his brethren wandered from Hebron to Shechem, from Shechem to Dothan,* now seeking the high lands and anon the springs of water, their earthly occupation engrossing all their thoughts, and even their lawful calling alienating their hearts from him. But the father's heart yearns for them, and he bids his-beloved son, "Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with their flocks, and bring me word again." But "when they saw him afar off, even before he came unto them, they conspired against him to slay him." Need we remind the reader of the parable by which, in words so very similar, the Lord of Life unmasked the hatred which filled the hearts of Israel against Himself? "Last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance."

If the narrative of Joseph's sufferings have any reference to those of Christ (and few will doubt that they have), it is evident that the Spirit has designed to represent in them the twofold rejection of the Son of God by Jew and Gentile. The shameful story of Judah's wrongdoing, intervening between the account of Joseph's being delivered to the Gentiles and of his life in Egypt, renders

* *Hebron*—joined together; communion. *Shechem*—the shoulder; a ridge of land. *Dothan*—two cisterns (a place of good pasture, where Joseph found his brethren feeding their sheep, because of the abundance of water).

these two circumstances the more distinct. Thus Peter charges Israel not only with being the betrayers, but the murderers, of the Prince of Life, although the Romans actually crucified Him; while at another time he fixes the charge upon the heathen and the kings of the earth and the rulers, in the words of the second Psalm, combining "Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel," as the joint perpetrators of the dreadful deed.

In the history of Joseph this is foreshown, with the indefiniteness indeed of a shadow, but with the unmistakable resemblance which a shadow bears to the substance by which it is cast. Say Joseph's brethren, "Let us slay him and cast him into some pit, and we will say some evil beast hath devoured him; and we shall see what will become of his dreams." Here was the seed which developed itself in fruit when the chief priests, mocking Jesus, with the scribes and elders, said, "If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." Such is the reception which dreams from God ever meet at the hands of men. But heavenly dreams are surer verities than the realities and facts of earth. How little did Israel think, either in the days of Joseph or of Jesus, that their own rage against the dreamers should be God's means of verifying their dreams of rule.

As soon as Joseph came they stript him of his coat of many colours before they cast him into the pit. The coat was the father's token of his affection, the sign of the honour in which he held the son of his love. They saw no beauty in the dress; love of their father had little place in their hearts, and in stripping Joseph of his coat, they dishonoured their father as well as him. So Jesus said, "I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me." "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him." "He that hateth me hateth my Father also."

While Joseph is in the pit his brethren sit down to eat bread ; they have at least for awhile got rid of him. But lifting up their eyes, they see a company of Ishmaelites bearing spicery and balm from Gilead into Egypt. The Ishmaelites were here to find, however, a better balm ; here, unexpectedly, should they pick up a treasure of which neither they nor those of whom they bought it could estimate the value. Egypt, through generations yet to come, should rejoice in all her coasts by reason of this Balm of Gilead, sent by God to heal her woes. And is it difficult here to trace the shadow of the Christ that was to come ? How little did the scribes and priests, and elders and people of Israel, think of the priceless treasure they were handing over into Gentile hands. Poor blind Israel ! they did not know their King. Surely it had been an honour to Jacob's sons for one of themselves to become so exalted as that they might worship him. But

"The ox knoweth his owner
And the ass his master's crib ;
But Israel doth not know me,
My people doth not consider me."

"For they that dwell at Jerusalem and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath-day in their ears, they have fulfilled them in condemning him."

And they sold him for ever. No more should Joseph be exclusively their own. When they see him again he shall be great in Egypt—king of another nation ; and if his brethren are blessed through him at all, it shall be in subordination to the Gentile people over whom he reigns. Even so, having rejected Jesus, Israel's blessing comes through, and secondary to, the Gentile Church.

Joseph was at first in favour in Egypt ; just as Jesus, through his boyhood, grew in favour not only with God, but man. He was trusted, too ; for the world knows well

the value of the honesty and uprightness of men of God. But his master's wife, because he is a goodly person, seeks to ensnare him into sin; and her darkness being made manifest by the light, she hates him, and Joseph is cast into prison. Glory to God for those immortal words, "How shall I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" How many a waverer may have been strengthened to endure by that heroic answer; even as, on the other hand, the sin of David and others has been used by some as an excuse for sin.

Joseph did not parley with temptation: he fled away. Discretion is the best part of valour. And down to the days of Paul, the Holy Ghost had revealed no safer way than to "flee fornication." Joseph would not trust himself: he knew there was a traitor in the camp, a treacherous heart within, and he wisely fled, and got himself out. He might have bethought himself of the consequences of leaving his garment in her hand, but he only troubled himself about pleasing God. The fear of man was not before him, but the fear of God, and so he could boldly say, "The Lord is my helper: I will not fear what man can do unto me."

There are circumstances in which we must stand our ground and fight, as our Lord did in the wilderness, and put the tempter to flight. But there are others from which the only path of duty is to flee away. Perhaps, however, these may often be avoided. It is possible that had Joseph been fully upon his guard, he might have escaped this temptation. Knowing that to which he was exposed, he might have avoided entering when "there were none of the men of the house within," or he might have taken the precaution of being accompanied by one of them. Being forewarned we should be forearmed. Our Lord has bid us watch as well as pray, lest we enter into temptation. And the wise man said of old, "Enter not into the

path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." We have seen lately some agonizing requests for prayer to be delivered from besetting sins. Here is the remedy. Look to Calvary. Keep the cross between yourself and sin. Let the blood flow between you and it. Never pass that Rubicon. If you think of it, let it be to devise means to keep it from touching you. For the wheel of nature is combustible stuff, and is easily set on fire of hell. A look ignites it, a touch sets it in a blaze.

The child of faith is a man of sorrow; pre-eminently so the Author and Finisher of faith. The beauty of this world was laid as a snare before the Holy One of God. And as the Saviour was tempted in the days of his flesh, so are his saints to-day. May God the Spirit write upon all our hearts the words wherewith the Lord of Glory silenced the tempter—"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Perhaps there never was a day on which that temptation of our Lord was so literally brought to pass as on this First of May, 1862. The glory of all the kingdoms of the world here lie before us, wooing us to sin. Now, Lord, teach thy children to use this world as not abusing it. Now may the Holy Ghost guard thy people against the adultery of worldliness; for "know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in Him. For the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

(*To be continued.*)

THE DOMINION OF THE LAW.

"The law hath dominion over a man so long as he liveth."—Rom. vii. 1.

THERE is a very common mistake prevalent in the present day amongst many Christian people, as to the non-obligatory character of the law of God. It is often asserted, and continually taken for granted as an axiom which no well-taught Christian should dispute, that the Gentiles never were, nor ever are, "under the law."

Now, what is really intended very often by this assertion is no more than what any one instructed in the Word would readily admit—that the Gentiles were not, and are not, under the Sinai covenant to keep the law.

But be it remembered that the Sinai stipulation did not, for the first time, put Israel under the obligation of keeping God's law; that previously existed, as well in the case of Israel as of all mankind. The Sinai compact was a promise and undertaking on Israel's part *to discharge* that obligation; whereupon God made known, with ominous accompaniments of terror, what his claims upon man as a sinner were, which claims Israel stipulated to meet. Now, from this covenant stipulation to discharge the obligations under which all by nature are, the Gentiles doubtless are exempt, but surely not from the obligation: otherwise, what is sin?

The mistake of supposing that because the Gentiles are not under the Sinai covenant, they are, therefore, not by nature under the law, is very similar to that of a debtor who, on speaking to others who are in debt to the same creditor, should find that some of them had undertaken to pay off their debts, and thereupon had been furnished by their creditor with an account of the same. Now, what would be thought of the mistake of this debtor if he should

conclude that, because he was not furnished with his bill, *he was not, therefore, in debt?* The cases are exactly parallel. Israel, ignorant of their powerlessness to meet God's demands, undertake to *discharge* their obligations. God furnishes them with an account of what his claims upon man are. Israel undertakes to pay off the debt, and soon miserably fails; but are the Gentiles thenceforth to conclude that they are under no similar obligations to God? "Is God the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? yea, of the Gentiles also" (Rom. iii.).

But a better proof than any illustration can afford is to be found in the New Testament statements—especially in the Epistles—concerning the nature of sin. We do not find one definition for the Jews and another for the Gentiles; as to both, the word declares, "Sin is the transgression of the law" (*ἀνομία*—literally, "*contrariety to law*").

To deny that the Gentiles are under obligation to keep the law, and that wholly independent of the Sinai covenant, is tantamount to a denial of their being chargeable with sin. It was not to Jews but to Gentiles that the apostle Paul wrote "the strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor. xv. 56).

But clearer still is the proof afforded by the apostle's method in Rom. ii. of bringing in the Gentile world, as well as the Jewish world, guilty before God. This he does by means of the law, not, it is true, the Sinai covenant, but the same law as originally written on man's heart. "For when the Gentiles which have not the law (*i. e.*, the Sinai revelation of it) do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves;" (or, as Alford renders it, "are the law to themselves," accounting for the absence of the article; perhaps "are law to themselves" would be nearest to the original): "which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another."

It is plain, therefore, that the assertion in ver. 12, "As

many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law," does not deny the responsibility to law of the Gentiles, but only contrasts the state of the heathen ignorant of the full demands of God's law, as made known on Sinai, with the more responsible because more enlightened state of the Jew; indeed, the following verses (above quoted) go on to show the reason why the heathen shall perish without law. It is because they originally had the law written on their hearts, that they are responsible for such light as to the demands of the law as they at present possess.

Let it also be borne in mind that the position of the Gentiles (those purely heathen excepted) is now materially altered by the mere fact of their knowing the letter of the law as given on Sinai. If the partial knowledge which conscience afforded was sufficient to bring them in as sinners before God then, how much more *now*, when the law as given to Israel is made known to all; remembering that the fact of our not having been concerned in the Sinai engagement, to keep it lessens in no degree our obligation as creatures to observe God's commands.

This change in the position of things, even as regards the Gentiles, owing to superior light as to God's requirements, is very clearly indicated in what St. Paul said to the Athenians, "The times of *this ignorance* God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness."

Another line of proof that legal responsibility is common to all, even those who are not under the peculiar engagement of Sinai to discharge what they owe, arises from the fact that the apostle Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, in setting forth the glorious truth of the believer's deliverance from the law through the death of Christ, treats it as a matter in which believers of the Gentiles as well as of

the Jews have a common interest. The principle set forth in chap. vii. is, "*The law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth.*" It does not except the Gentile. Nor would the apostle say, "Wherefore, my brethren (writing to Gentiles) ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ," if they had never been subject to it.

Indeed, it would appear that the fact above referred to, that knowledge of law involves responsibility to law, is the ground on which the apostle brings in all to whom he was writing at Rome as subject to the dominion of law until delivered therefrom by Christ; for the opening words of chap. vii. are, "Know ye not, brethren (*for I speak to them that know the law*) that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth," as though the dominion of the law might possibly be denied by those who knew it not (although Rom. ii. shows that even such a denial would not be valid); but the fact that those to whom he was writing *knew* it, is sufficient to establish its dominion over them.

Another, and a totally different question, by no means to be confounded—as is often done—with the dominion of the law over all, is the continuance of that dominion over all who do not fly for refuge to Jesus, and the emancipation therefrom of all who do. The believer is "not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. vi.). Blessed truth! Glorious freedom! But surely not in consequence of no Gentile being under the law; but because, though once under it, he has been through Christ delivered from it.

We shall hope to resume this subject, God willing, in a future paper, and to point out how the believer is delivered from the law through the death of Christ, and how new obligations are thereby incurred, not of a kind which he cannot meet (as must be the case while under the law), but such as, with the grace of God enabling him, he may, and in the midst of much imperfection, does discharge; being "married to him who is raised from the dead, that he should bring forth fruit unto God."

In the meanwhile, we would earnestly and affectionately urge upon any of our readers who have been misled by the prevailing mistake, the error of which we have endeavoured to expose, that they should search for themselves and see what God's Word says on this momentous subject. It must very materially affect the ministry of the gospel, if the law, which in Scripture is set forth as that by which is "the knowledge of sin," is treated as something with which mankind generally have nothing to do. Abolish the dominion of the law over man as such, and you abolish not only the means of producing, with the Spirit's power, a sense of sin; but also you efface from any applicability to the believer some of the most precious portions of God's Word descriptive of the deliverance of the believer from condemnation. Thus Christ is robbed of the glory which belongs to Him as "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," and the sinner is left in careless unconcern, ignorant of sin and of its damning nature, apathetic as to death and its fearful consequences, because he is not warned that "the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." "The law," the apostle says, writing to Timothy (1 Tim. i. 8), "is good if a man use it lawfully." But, surely, it is not using it lawfully to deny what the following verses assert, that though it is not made for a righteous man, it is "for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane," &c.

To impose the Sinai covenant upon those in Christ is that against which Paul ever indignantly protested; but that is a very different thing from denying the dominion of the law, which had been to him the means of awakening conscience to a sense of sin—"I had not known sin but by the law" (Rom. vii. 7), and which he appears to have urged upon others in this light, if we may take Acts xxiv. 25 as indicative of his method of appealing to the conscience of his hearers.

H. E. B.

CAST THY BREAD UPON THE WATERS.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."

THIS is "seed" which we are there to cast, and that seed is "the Word of God," every word of which is bread, yea seed, and such as will bear fruit.

The following circumstance will tend to illustrate this fact: A minister, having occasion to remove his papers, he took a number of old tracts, sermons, &c., and gave them to a missionary. This man began at once to scatter the seed. Among these papers was a sermon preached by that minister six years since. This sermon the missionary lent to a boatman on the River Thames, who lent it to a comrade, a wicked man. He was deeply convinced of his sin by reading it, and was asked to accompany his fellow-labourer to a place of worship. There he heard the word that pierced his soul, so that the arrows of conviction stuck fast in him. He continued to hear the word, until he could rest no longer, but, accompanied by his companion, went to the minister and made known his state. Prayer was immediately made, and peace at once descended into the penitent soul, so that he left the place believing in the Lord with his whole heart. He is now a diligent attendant upon the means of grace, rejoicing in the salvation of God. Let all who have old tracts or sermons scatter them abroad upon all waters; the fruit shall appear, some it may be quickly, and others after many days.

The sermon referred to was preached at Zion Chapel, Southampton, on the occasion of a girl burnt under very fearful circumstances. Her death caused great sensation in the town, and many of every class came to hear the sermon. But now, after six years have passed away, that very sermon has been the means of snatching a brand from the burning. To God alone be the glory. J. T.

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY
JOHN.—VI.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."—John i. 43—51.

THE above paragraph is the third in John's narrative which begins with these words of date, "on the morrow," here rendered, "the day following." The incident which it relates happened on the fourth day from the beginning of the history. It deserves to be noted how the progress throughout these four days is steadily from the Baptist to the Messiah, from John to Jesus. On the first day, the forerunner alone appears, bearing testimony, however, to One mightier than himself, present, but unknown. On the second, John again is prominent, but now he points to the Saviour, and bids his auditors behold Him. On the third, the Baptist appears simply for a moment to introduce his followers to the Lamb of God, and the day is spent with Jesus. On the fourth, the day we have now reached, John has altogether retired from view; we discern his hand only in the disciples whom he has prepared for their Lord. Jesus now, gathering these disciples

round himself, fills the entire view. The morning star, waxing paler as the flush of dawn advances, at length is completely lost to sight in the effulgence of the risen sun.

Let the case of Nathanael give unity to the illustration of this passage. Let us look at the incidents and sayings here recorded, as grouped around him. The great subject indeed of the paragraph, is the conversion of this disciple to the faith of Jesus. We call him disciple, as one of the twelve, not hesitating to identify Nathanael with the apostle named by the other evangelists—Bartholomew. The following considerations seem to warrant this conclusion. All the other disciples here introduced are of the twelve; Bartholomew is nowhere mentioned by John, under that name; in the lists of the other evangelists, Philip and Bartholomew are joined together; and John (chap. xxi. 2) plainly appears to include Nathanael among the chosen apostles. As Peter was Simon Bar-jonas, this disciple, we infer, was Nathanael Bar-tholomew. Looking at his admission to discipleship among the immediate followers of Christ as the central fact here, let us, to help unity of view, arrange the whole incidents of the story, in relation to him.

In the steps which led to Nathanael's faith, we have first the call of Philip, who appears in the narrative, chiefly, as it seems, to introduce his fellow disciple (verse 43). The scene of the story, hitherto, has been the vicinity of Jordan, in the southern portion of its course. Our Lord wills now to return northwards to Galilee, and in connexion with his setting out, finds Philip, either, as we say, casually, by the way; or by design, and after whatever search was necessary. From the connexion between the two clauses of the verse, we are disposed to think that Philip was also preparing to return home. Finding him, our Lord said, Follow me. This is the first direct call to a disciple from Jesus himself. The Evangelist does not formally say that Philip obeyed,

but we gather as much from the sequel of the story. He did become forthwith a follower of Jesus. Is it asked how that word of Jesus availed to persuade and win him so readily? It would be enough, in answer, to say that it came with divine power to his heart. But we have a little interesting light thrown on the process of conviction in Philip's mind by what follows. The Evangelist tells us that "Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter." Now, for what purpose is this statement introduced? To suggest, as we apprehend, an explanation of Philip's preparedness to hear and obey the Saviour's call. He had, probably, met with the two brothers, who were his fellow-townsmen, and had heard from them about their discovery of yesterday. That communication had been had with the other disciples in some form, is evident from the circumstance that Philip, addressing Nathanael, says, not *I* have found, but, *we* have found the Messiah. So, in Philip's case also, the mediate instrumentality of other apostles is employed; and he, in turn, is called to-day, in order, further, that a second may be found through his agency.

Following, then, the messenger by whom Nathanael is to be invited, we have next the message he carried (ver. 45). Philip, it would appear, like Andrew and John in quest of Peter, went to search for Nathanael, and call him. The two, though not fellow-townsmen, were probably intimate friends. There was some kindredship of disposition about them. We know that Nathanael was candid and guileless, and notices of Philip elsewhere shew him to have been frank, simple, and devout. It is illustrative of his open simplicity, that in accosting Nathanael, he does not hide the offence of Christ's country. He says at once, Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph. Nathanael and Philip both knew the place—perhaps Philip had personal acquaintance with the household of Joseph and

Mary. If so, let us the more admire the faith which accepts so confidently and joyously "the carpenter's son," as "Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write."

The mention, however, of Nazareth was to Nathanael a stumbling-block in the way; but, we shall find it wisely and speedily removed (ver. 46). To Philip's frank word, his friend, in effect, replies—Do you say that the Nazarene is the Messiah? Impossible! There must be some mistake. He exclaims, "Can *any* good thing come out of Nazareth?" How much less, it is suggested, could *the good thing* shewn by God to men (Micah vi. 8) arise thence? The question of Nathanael makes it evident that for its meanness or its vileness, the town of Nazareth was despised by the inhabitants of other parts of Galilee itself, as Galilee was scorned, as a whole, by the southern Jew. The question, however, is but the honest avowal of unwarrantable prejudice. The whole history of Israel should have taught Nathanael not to limit, as he thus ventures to do, the power and the grace of God. Philip deals with his friend's fore-judgment with great simplicity, but with great wisdom. He merely says, Come and see. Argument might have strengthened the feelings he wishes to overcome; so he asks his companion only to examine for himself. Perhaps he learned the formula of invitation from the story of the day before. To go and see had been enough to convince John and Andrew—it will surely be sufficient for Nathanael. His prejudice will vanish before the light that shines in the character and words of Jesus. To a proposal so reasonable as Philip's invitation embodied, it was impossible for one of the candour and guilelessness possessed by Nathanael to offer objection. He went with his friend at once.

The result justified the wisdom of the course taken by Philip. The blessed and never-erring Lord so deals with

the disciple whom He is now attracting to his side, that his prejudice has not room to reappear. Evidence, disarming and conquering it, anticipates and supersedes inquiry, and conducts at once to faith and joyous confession. As Nathanael approaches, led by Philip, the voice of Jesus was heard saying of him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." The words were a gracious welcome, and falling from the lips of perfect truth, formed an encomium of the highest kind. The meaning is in part evident from the very phrase "Israelite indeed." Nathanael was one of those who are not only of Israel, but very Israel; he was a true child of God. But among the true children themselves, this commendation seems to point him out as peculiarly deserving of the honourable name they bear. He is a true Israelite, "in whom is no guile." He was one characterized by what the apostle describes as "simplicity and godly sincerity:" a guileless one. The meaning of the whole sentence will be placed in a more vivid light, if we go back to the period in the history of Jacob at which he first received his new name. That period was a crisis in the patriarch's life. When "prince with God" was substituted for "supplanter," the father of the tribes was at once vanquished and victorious. His human strength was gone, his divinely-imparted strength triumphant. The mysterious wrestling of the night, which left him with disjointed thigh, but able to say to his antagonist, "I will not let thee go," was a representation in epitome and figure of the long life-discipline by which he had been purified from the craft and proneness to resort to human contrivance which appear in his previous history, and prepared henceforth to prevail in the strength of a direct and sole dependence on God. Nathanael was like his great ancestor in that simplicity of reliance God-wards, as well as in honesty of discipleship, and probity of life. And, like the patriarch, he was strong

in his simplicity. He was a prevailing suppliant. Under the fig-tree, as we shall see shortly, he was like Israel by the brook. He had power with God.

All this, however, though couched in our Lord's commendation, could hardly at once be apparent to Nathanael himself. His very one-foldness of character enables him, indeed, to accept the testimony to his sincerity as true. He wonders, therefore, how Jesus, whom he evidently had not heretofore known personally, could know his character, and describe it. "Whence knowest thou me," he exclaims. Had Philip been reporting concerning him beforehand? Our Lord's answer comes, as if to say, No; my acquaintanceship with thee is older than Philip's discipleship. "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." Here there is much meaning conveyed by the words, "under the fig-tree." Nathanael had evidently been there all alone. He had retired to the spot, doubtless, to meditate and pray. As a devout man, looking for redemption in Jerusalem, and as a believer of the testimony of the Baptist, expecting the Deliverer as at hand, his thoughts and supplications, it can hardly be questioned, were directed to the coming of the Messiah. Now when our Lord said to him, "I saw thee," the words not only showed Nathanael that Jesus had observed him, when he was hidden from all others, but they enfolded a reference, felt at once by the disciple, to his closet exercise and experience; such a reference, we conclude, as convinced him that he had now the very answer to his prayers before him, and the place became to him at once Peniel, as the bank of Jabbok did to his great progenitor. So, over prejudice prostrate and dead, forth came the prompt confession, in which he recognized Jesus as "the Son of God, the King of Israel,"—the divine Messiah, come to rule his people.

The promptitude of Nathanael's faith evoked fresh ap-

probation from his Lord. The question of ver. 50 implies commendation of his readiness to receive the truth. The evidence vouchsafed to him had been sufficient, but comparatively simple and slight; a spirit otherwise than guileless had hardly yielded to it. The words of the Master seem expressive of a pleased surprise; bright contrast to the emotions of other times, when He must say to his disciples, "O slow of heart to believe." The reward of Nathanael shall be greater sights than those already vouchsafed to him; for "to him that hath shall more be given." The proof of truth already furnished, the truth thus discovered and established, had been very precious, but greater things than these are in store for him: ampler evidences are coming, and fuller and more wonderful views of truth. He has seen something of the Messiah, as divine and born to reign; he shall see Him as also in human nature, come to suffer and atone. All the marvels of our Lord's subsequent life and death are now awaiting him, with all the knowledge of his character and work which shall be taught thereby. It is interesting to notice here, that the only other time on which Nathanael is named in this Gospel, is on an occasion which gave him a sight of his risen Lord performing a miracle, renewedly prophetic of the successful mission of the apostles to draw men to Him by the preaching of his cross. But the greater visions promised were not to be Nathanael's exclusive privilege; they were to be shared by his fellow-disciples. So, in further explanation of the promise, Jesus addresses, through Nathanael, an assurance to all his followers, that an opened heaven would reveal its marvels to them. "Hereafter," in ver. 51, is equivalent to "from this time"; the meaning is not some time hence, but in all time henceforth. During the whole course of his ministry and work on earth, inclusive of his resurrection and ascension to glory, the sight of opened heavens was to be

the disciples' privilege. The allusion is not merely to special cases of literal verification of Christ's words, though such there were—at his baptism, at his rising from the dead, at his going up into heaven—but to the abundance and glory of the displays of divinity which, like a constant flood of light, would come around Him from the skies. Thus far, speaking of the greater visions to be vouchsafed, viewed as evidences; so much grander than that solitary display to which Nathanael, to his honour, had yielded his ready faith. But there were also the fruits of evidence, in which view, likewise, greater sights were coming. The result of Christ's work would be, not the giving back a throne to oppressed Jewish nationality, but the disclosure of a way back to God. Moreover, it would be seen to be effected, not by display of divine power, but by suffering in human nature. The contrast here, between Nathanael's "Son of God," and Christ's own "Son of Man," is very touching and instructive. Angels will come, but not to attend the majesty of a divine King, showing his glory and his greatness; but to minister to a lowly, human sufferer; by whose sufferings, notwithstanding—sufferings of the Lamb of God—heaven and earth are to be reconciled. The reference in the words of our Lord to Jacob's striking vision, is easily perceived, and suggests the right interpretation. It is this. Now has come the time for accomplishing in verity what Jacob beheld in his dream. Nathanael, and Philip, and Peter, will see with waking eyes, what their great progenitor saw in vision of the night. Heaven and earth will be joined—a way back from the earth to the skies will be set open—God and man will meet in the accepted Mediator—and there will be talk, in words of peace and of happy covenant, between the Lord above and sinners below; while the angels go forth as ministering spirits, to serve them that shall be heirs of salvation. Here is evermore the great sight given to faith

—a path of acceptance back to God, opened by the incarnation, and humiliation, and death of the Word the Lamb. Let the Lord's "Verily, verily," seal our sense of the importance and the grandeur of it.

Have we been led, by such steps as God has marked out for us, to Nathanael's believing confession? Has it been made impossible for us to resist his conclusion, or restrain the acknowledgment of it, by disclosure of Himself made to our souls? Has He said to us, "I saw you"? Have we been content to rest with first manifestations of his grace? Or do we pant after the greater things which are always in the promise? What can we now see? Is heaven open or shut to us? Is the doctrine of Christ's mediation vivid to us as the symbol of it was to Jacob's sleeping sense? Does the foot of the ladder touch the ground where we lie? Can we keep close to our own heart the revealed Way to the Father—our own way to Him? Ah! it were sad, if, living under the light of that "hereafter," with the heavens opened above us always, and pouring down their manifestations of saving grace as they are doing in our day, we should miss the sight, and blindly pass the road to the Father's presence!

"WHOSO OFFERETH PRAISE GLORIFIETH ME."

PSALM L. 23.

THE Hebrew word for praise (*todah*—literally acknowledgment or confession) is beautifully emphatic. In praising a fellow-creature, we may easily surpass the truth; but in praising God we have only to go on *confessing* what He really is to us. Here it is impossible to exceed the truth, and here is genuine praise.

BENGEL.

DELIVERANCE FROM THE LAW.

"But now we are delivered from the law, being dead to that wherein we were held."—Rom. vii. 6. (*See marginal reading.*)

IT was attempted in the last number to show how little Scriptural authority there is for the notion that responsibility to law belongs only to the Jews. This error was traced to its source, namely, the habit of confounding Israel's voluntary subjection of themselves to the Sinai covenant to keep the law, with the subjection under which all are by nature to observe the commands of their Creator, owing to which subjection and our incompetency as sinners to discharge its obligations, all are guilty before God. It was proved from Scripture that "by the law is the knowledge of sin," that "the strength of sin is the law," for "sin is the transgression of the law." And as "all have sinned" all must have broken the law, and consequently, have been subject to it.

It was pointed out that denying this universal subjection to law is tantamount to a denial of sin, and that the tendency of it is to make sinners indifferent, by reason of withholding the terrors of the law, which individually, *as well as dispensationally*, are intended to be a "schoolmaster" unto Christ. And just as a denial of subjection to law brings with it indifference as to sin, and consequent apathy as to salvation, so does it render pointless and inapplicable (to any but the Jew) those most precious portions of God's word, such as that quoted at the head of this article, which describe the believer's deliverance from the law through the death of Christ.

We have now to consider the blessed fact of a believer's deliverance from the law, effected in and through the death of Jesus. May all who recognize the solemn fact of a

responsibility to law by nature, which owing to their inability to meet its demands shuts them up to hopeless condemnation, learn to value aright "the exceeding riches of God's grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

The first principle which Scripture lays down as necessary for the effecting of this deliverance, is that the law, under whose dominion lie the objects of God's mercy, should not be set aside, but "established," yea, "magnified and made honourable," in their deliverance from it. When, therefore, the great Deliverer came, so far from making light of the law, He expressly proclaimed its immutability and the necessity of its fulfilment. "Till heaven and earth pass not one jot or tittle shall in anywise pass from the law till all be fulfilled."

We have this truth also set forth in such passages as "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law" (Rom. iii. 3). "*I through the law have died to the law*" (Gal. ii. 9). "When the fulness of time was come God sent forth his Son made of a woman, *made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law*, &c. (Gal. iv. 5).

It is sometimes said, that these passages merely refer to the satisfaction which the death of Christ rendered to the law, and that they by no means include the fulfilment of the law by Christ in his life; which fulfilment some think wholly unnecessary, and others assert to have been only necessary for Christ himself in order to constitute or rather evidence his perfect sinlessness, and thereby his fitness to be the sacrificial victim, the Lamb without blemish or spot.

But it will probably be granted by all (if a little attention be given to the subject) that Christ could not have needed to work out a righteousness for himself. He was always "the Holy One of God," a life of subjection to law

could not have been needed even to demonstrate his fitness for presenting Himself as the Lamb without blemish or spot. It was to qualify himself for becoming a substitute for others who were under the law, that He was "made (or born) under the law." It was the having met the demands of the law in his life, not for Himself but on behalf of his people, that enabled Him to die as their substitute. He thus, with the consent of the law, took the place of those under the law, and by dying redeemed them from under the law.

Here properly comes in the doctrine of the vicarious life obedience of Christ, which at present is causing no small discussion amongst Christians, and which it is sad to observe is stirring up such bitter thoughts and angry words, as if some vital point of doctrine were endangered: whereas, it is little more than a contention about words, the main and most important features of truth being recognized by both parties, though the heat of contention has made them more eager to exaggerate their differences than to recognize their substantial agreement.

Both admit that Christ is the righteousness of his people. Both admit that to constitute the righteousness of his people, his life is inseparable from his death—for although some separate them in thought, none do in fact; and though some have (perhaps unwisely) written that the life justifies while the death atones, yet it surely is dealing rather hardly with an unwary expression to insist upon this meaning that there can be such a thing as pardon without justification, or justification without pardon.

Where the real difference lies between the contending parties seems to be, as to whether the believer's righteousness is Christ *as now the Righteous One in Heaven*, or Christ *as formerly the Righteous One on earth*.

The old view formerly advocated by many, that Christ's

obedience to the law during his life on earth is the righteousness which is imputed to the believer, is certainly defective; it is defective in this, that it falls short of presenting Him "*as He is*" now in heaven, as the substitute and surety of his people; but it is defective rather than erroneous, its fault is not that it is not true so far as it goes—but, that it does not go far enough.

That Christ was obedient to the law when on earth none can deny; that He fulfilled the law, no one without admitting dangerous error, could question; but it must be owned that old divines were too apt to stop short here, and represent the believer's present imputed righteousness as the having set down to his account all that Christ did when on earth, rather than what Scripture presents to us, present "*acceptance in the Beloved*;" "*as He is* (not was) so are we in this world."

"Christ is the end (or fulfilment)* of the law for righteousness," for that we should be thankful; but now He is far above the sphere of subjection to law, being seated on the throne of the lawgiver Himself. There are we also, "if we are risen with Him," not merely accounted as righteous owing to his life and death, but presented as righteous in his present resurrection life.

Instead, therefore, of setting one view against the other, or engaging in the unseemly paper warfare which at present prevails on the subject; let us rather rejoice to trace in Scripture both views, but each in its own place. Let us recognize the obedience of the life preparatory to, and qualifying for, the *substitutional* death on the cross. Let us own the resurrection life as the result of this substitutional

* Τέλος—end or fulfilment—the latter is the translation adopted by Cranmer in his Bible, and not without reason—the verb τελεῖν being used in Rom. ii. 27, in connection with "law" in the sense of "fulfil"—"shall not uncircumcision, which is by nature *if it fulfil the law*," &c. See also James ii. 8, "If ye fulfil the royal law," where the verb is the same.

death, and as that in which Christ now appears before God, for "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Both these are necessary, for both have been realized in Christ, and both therefore every believer has; however, as it is Christ himself, rather than any state or condition through which Christ passed, that the believer has, it is more Scriptural to regard Christ in heaven as our righteousness, than merely his obedience on earth, considered as set down to our account.

But this is somewhat of a digression: our immediate subject being deliverance from the law,* and that as effected by the death of Christ.

Christ being tested as the righteous one, and being found such under the law; Christ being received as the righteous one into heaven—neither of these two facts would deliver

* When speaking of the believer's deliverance from the law, it may be well (to prevent being misunderstood) to define clearly what is meant by the expression, and what is not meant.

It cannot mean that the believer is delivered from loving and delighting in the law. "I consent unto the law that it is good." "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom. vii. 16, 22).

Nor can it mean that the believer is delivered from serving the law with his renewed mind. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God" (Rom. vii. 25). Nor yet that he is delivered from the obligation of loving God and loving his neighbour, which love is "the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10).

But though love is the fulfilling of the law, it does not follow that any amount of love will satisfy the law. The law itself accurately defines what its demands are. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy mind, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy strength; and thy neighbour *as thyself*." And nothing short of this perfection can the law possibly acknowledge.

Now from this legal obligation to fully satisfy the demands of the law by *his own* obedience the believer is delivered. He is not now "a debtor to do the whole law" (Gal. v. 3). He is delivered from a *legal obligation* (which, if law be law, must be inseparable from penalty) to render a sinless obedience, which, in his present compound state of flesh and spirit, is unattainable. He is not delivered from obedience, but from the necessity of yielding obedience of that kind which he cannot yet possibly render. He serves God, but now it is in newness of spirit, not in the oldness of the letter.

sinner from the dominion of the law. Death, which is the penal sanction of the law, can alone (grace having provided a substitute) become the delivering power.

It is of this substitutional deliverance of his people by dying in their stead, that the apostle speaks in Rom. vii. 1-6.

The passage is one frequently misunderstood; let us briefly consider it.

"Know ye not brethren (for I speak to them that know the law) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth."

Here is the principle which is to explain the believer's deliverance from the law's dominion. The difficulty, however, seems to be in its applicability, for the believer is not dead, of whom it has been asserted (chapter vi.) that he is not under the law.

Then comes in the illustration of the woman's deliverance from the marriage law, not by her own death, but by her husband's death, and this being at the same time an instance where the principle referred to holds good, the illustration is as exact as it is pertinent.

"For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband *so long as he liveth*; but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband," &c.

Now the exact bearing of this illustration upon the case in point is very remarkable, and yet, strange to say, no commentator ever seems to have noticed it. Alford says, "In the example, the liberated person is the survivor; in the thing treated, the liberated person is the dead person." Thus showing that he wholly fails to see how exactly parallel are the cases.

The fact is, in the example the liberated person (though the survivor) is liberated by her husband's death being legally her death. In the eye of the law, man and wife are one. The death of either is the legal death of the bipartite individual to whom the marriage law applies. It is thus that the example or illustration of the wife's free-

dom from the marriage law through her husband's death comes under the principle of "The law hath dominion over a man so long as he liveth." The dominion of the marriage law only ceases through the legal death of the wife in the person of her husband.

Exactly parallel to this is the thing to be illustrated, "Wherefore my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law (*not in your own persons, but*) in the person of Christ." Moreover, the oneness existing between husband and wife is but a faint type (Ephes. v. 32) of that which exists between Christ and the Church, in virtue of which, his death is her death; his glory, her glory.

The parallelism between the illustration and the matter illustrated may thus be drawn, with more correctness than Dean Alford has done :

In the illustration, the liberated person is the survivor—the wife.

In the matter illustrated, the liberated person is the survivor also—the believer.

In the illustration, liberation is effected by death; so also in the matter treated of.

In the illustration, the death of the husband is the death which liberates the wife.

In the matter treated, the death of Christ is that which liberates the believer.

In both cases, owing to the legal oneness betwixt husband and wife, Christ and his Church, the death of the former (in each case) is virtually the death of the latter, and therefore the principle has its fulfilment in both cases substitutionally: "The law hath dominion over a man *so long as he liveth.*"

Reader, have you "become dead to the law by the body of Christ"? Are you one with him? If not, should you be found out of Christ, the law must have everlasting dominion over you even to your never-ending condemna-

tion. Should death overtake you before you have found refuge in Him, remember that "the sting of death is sin and *the strength of sin is the law.*" Oh, do not delay! to-day, while it is called to-day harden not your hearts, but fly for refuge to Jesus. Once "in Him" you may smile at death, and sing, "Thanks be unto God that giveth us the victory *through our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

H. E. B.

THE TRESPASS OFFERING.—(LEV. v.)

I CANNOT offend any of my fellow-creatures without offending God. Every offence committed against man is primarily to be considered an offence against God. Our soliciting and conferring forgiveness of and upon each other, is oftentimes little more than collusion amongst thieves. God is forgotten altogether, and there is often a vast deal of hypocrisy, and deceit, and malice, and envy inhabiting the bosom, while we are lying with our tongues to God and to each other.

If we were in the habit of tracing all sins, in their malignity, as committed against God in the first instance, we should not err. We sometimes hear of two individuals being under one roof who cannot agree; at length we hear of their being reconciled. It requires but half an eye to see that they hate each other profoundly, notwithstanding their professed reconciliation. Do any of you know what this is? Are you such hypocrites in mercy? Let me advise you—lose sight of each other immediately, and consider yourselves but as dust and ashes, and whatever offences you may have committed against each other, consider them primarily as offences against God.

HOWELS.

JEHOVAH-JIREH.

THIS was the divine impression made upon Abraham's mind after God's wonderful interposition in the matter of Isaac's deliverance from death (Gen. xxii.) It was the continued exercise of a previous faith (verse 9) which led him to select this title, as a fitting memorial of a past transaction, as well as an earnest of greater and better things to come. Abraham had endured trial to the extent which God intended, and was thereby led to a new experience of God's character. New thoughts pervaded his mind, new hopes animated his soul, and these found expression in the significant name Jehovah-Jireh—The Lord will provide.

Many since the days of the patriarch have found the preciousness of this trait in Jehovah's character. The sinner, looking from himself to the cross of Jesus, has beheld therein the elements of salvation, for God has indeed provided a lamb for sacrifice in the person of his own dear Son (John i. 29). The saint, renouncing his own merit and sufficiency, and looking to a risen Saviour, views therein the essentials of strength, for the Lord Jehovah has become his salvation, and is all-sufficient for his need (Phil. iv. 19). Though the promise was special to Abraham—like a similar one to Paul (2 Cor. xii. 9)—it has now become the common property of all who believe. Yes, brethren, the Lord Jesus can fill up the deepest want of your heart, administer comfort in the severest sorrow of your soul, bring deliverance in the time of your heaviest trial in life; your extremity is God's opportunity.

“When his hour strikes for relieving,
Help breaks forth amazingly;
And to shame your anxious grieving,
Often unexpectedly.”

Blessed thought! The Lord will provide! He will "give us this day our daily bread" (Psa. xxxiv. 10). He will see to it that his children have support in their varied trials (1 Cor. x. 13). He will take care that all things, though apparently adverse, shall contribute to their growth in grace, and to their meetness for the kingdom of heaven. For "hath he said, and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

"Though dark be their way, since He is their guide,
'Tis theirs to obey, 'tis his to provide."

The natural world, in the constant succession of seed-time and harvest, bears witness to Jehovah's truth-speaking character (Gen. viii. 22). And shall his church, his new-creation in Christ Jesus, be less the object of his care, and the verifier of his faithfulness? (2 Cor. i. 20). Truly the Lord *has* provided all things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet. i. 3). Truly the believer can humbly yet confidently say: I shall not want, for He who is my Shepherd is Jehovah-Jireh. I shall not want life, even eternal life, for it was this He came to give, and is empowered to bestow. I shall not want nourishment, for He has given me his Word and his Spirit, the green pastures and the still waters (Psa. xxiii. 2). As to the future, I can leave it in his hands, and can hope to the end for the grace that is to be revealed at the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ.

Reader! is this thy experience? If not, behold the Lamb of God! Look and live! There's life in a look at the Crucified One. Behold God's great and free provision for perishing sinners. God has now provided a Lamb. He has been seen putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Are yours put away? Have you brought them to Jesus, and by faith laid them on Him, to be borne away and remembered no more against you? "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of

God : and they that hear shall live" (John v. 15). "Hear, and your soul shall live" (Isa. lv. 3).

Reader! if this be thy experience, then trust ye in the Lord for ever. Hope is an element of patience, faith of victory, love of service. Cherish the impression within your heart: Jehovah-Jireh. Trust the Lord's wisdom, care, and guidance. Cultivate further acquaintance with Him in prayer for yourself and others. Attend to his well-known voice. And in all tribulation, be assured of his everlasting love and sympathy. J. H.

ADAM AND CHRIST.

"And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift. For the judgment was by one (offence) to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification" (Rom. v. 16).

A GLORIOUS point of contrast. The condemnation by Adam was for one sin; but the justification by Christ is an absolution not only from the guilt of that first offence, mysteriously attaching to every individual of the race, but from the countless offences into which, as a germ lodged in the bosom of every child of Adam, it unfolds itself in his life. This is the meaning of "grace abounding towards us in the abundance of the gift of righteousness." It is a grace not only rich in its character, but rich in detail. It is a righteousness not only rich in a complete justification of the guilty, condemned sinner; but rich in the amplitude of the ground which it covers, leaving no one sin of any of the justified uncanceled, but making him, though loaded with the guilt of myriads of offences, "the righteousness of God in Christ."—*Brown on the Romans.*

THE WATER OF SEPARATION.—I.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke. And ye shall give her unto Eleazer the priest, that he may bring her forth without the camp, and one shall slay her before his face. And Eleazer the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times. And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn. And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer. Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean until the even. And he that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall be unclean until the even. And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin."—Num. xix. 1—9.

IN the goodness of God, He has not only provided for cleansing a sinner from his sins, when in his lost state, but also for cleansing his own people from the uncleanness they may receive while sojourning in the place where uncleanness is. Such is our place, as made partakers of life in Christ, *now in the world*, but waiting for deliverance, when He who is our life shall appear, and we also shall appear with Him in glory. Then there will be no danger of touching anything answering to the dead body of a man, or to a tent wherein a man dieth, or to one slain with a sword in the open fields, or to a bone of a man, or to a grave. When we appear in glory, the living only will be there. In the world it is not so; but in the goodness of God, all needful provision has been made for us until that day. When Christ commends unto the Father those whom the Father had given Him, He says, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world." And again, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou

shouldest keep them from the evil." He further prays for them, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." Now while in the world, we need to be "kept from the evil." We also need cleansing, of which there is a type in Numb. xix. in the water of separation, a purification for sin. In order to this, "The Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring thee a red heifer, without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke." The red heifer was to be brought by the children of Israel, marking the common interest they all had in it, and the consciousness they were also to have of this gracious provision for their constant cleansing. The riches of this grace is for all the people of God, and is reserved in their behalf.

It has pleased God so to set us before Him in Christ that we should have sure title and interest in what belongs to our peace, and should not be in ignorance and uncertainty as to our resource and remedy in the time of need, but know it as laid up for us, and our interest in it, in common with all the saints. In the day of our need there should not be the ignorant question of, "What shall I do?" but the participation of that which is provided for our cleansing, in intelligence and in thankfulness.

The children of Israel were to bring a red heifer. In the colour of the heifer was an emblem of the blood.* It

* See the use of this colour, as an emblem, in the following Scriptures : "The sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side, as *red as blood*" (2 Kings iii. 22). "Wherefore art thou *red* in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger and trample them in my fury; and their *blood* shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment" (Isa. lxiii. 2, 3).

was to be "without spot," and one wherein was no blemish, because it was the type of Him in whom is no sin. It was to be one on which never came yoke, because Christ had no weary servitude until He came into the world to save sinners. His was glory with the Father before the world. The bosom of the Father was his place, in the love of the Father "before the foundation of the world."

As a way to cleanse the unclean was the purpose of God in this, the priest was to bring it without the camp—the place of judgment—there to be killed, for "Christ suffered, the Just for the unjust."

The first act of the priest, when the heifer was killed before his face, was to show forth the power of the blood. "And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times." The blood was sprinkled before the tabernacle of the congregation, for it has its aspect toward the place of blessing, though he who yielded it came into the place of judgment. The offering was brought without the camp, but the blood was sprinkled before the tabernacle of the congregation. Christ suffered for us without the gate, but we enter by his blood into the holiest of all.

In this ordinance all is burned: "And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn." In other offerings the blood was not burned, for they had immediate reference to the connexion of the sinner with Christ in suffering, in making an atonement for sin, and in them the ashes were poured out; but when the ashes were to be kept, the blood was to be burned in them. In the ashes was preserved the perpetual remembrance and abiding value of the blood once shed and sprinkled, and the perpetual blessing resulting from the once humbled condition of Christ in judgment.

The precious value of all this is further marked in the priest's taking cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and casting them into the midst of the burning of the heifer. Cedar wood: the same costly wood which was used in building the temple, typical of the glory of Christ, is here thrown into the burning, which was typical of the sufferings of Christ. Hyssop: in this was shown the purging power that is connected with the humiliation of Christ in judgment. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean."

As to the engagement in this service, there is a difference between serving God in the place where all is holy, and in reference only to what is holy; and being in service in the place and in reference to objects where uncleanness is. The character of this latter is marked in the case of those engaged in this service: "Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean until the even. And he that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall be unclean until the even." When the priests were serving in the holy place, not outside the camp as here, and when, in communion with the Lord, they were eating their portion of the offering, then there were no such directions as these. The higher and happier service of those who are made priests unto God, is in the joy of fellowship in what is already brought into nearness to Him. The service here spoken of is connected with the judgment of sin,* and in the place of that judgment. It is important for us to distinguish between a service in which we ourselves get food, and a service after which we have to wash ourselves.

* The word translated "*a purification for sin*," in Num. xix. 9, is the same word as that used for the expression, "*a sin-offering*," in other parts of Scripture; but this is the only offering in which all was to be burned outside the camp.

The Lord has also given us much teaching in the service of him who gathers up the ashes: "And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel, for a water of separation; it is a purification for sin." It was a clean man that should gather up the ashes of the heifer, and it was in a clean place they were to be kept. All is clean that has its aspect as a type toward Him who suffered for us. When Christ is foreshown to us as coming to suffer, that which is the type of Him is "without blemish and without spot." When Christ is foreshown as judged in our stead, of which the ashes are the type, it is a clean person that must gather them, and it is in a clean place they must be kept. When it was commanded that the ashes should thus be gathered up and should thus be kept, God has shown us in this what an estimate He had of the precious value thus laid up for us through the sufferings of Christ.

We also learn the mind of God about us, as connected with the place where the ashes were kept. On the day of atonement, the blood was brought into the most holy place, but in this other ordinance the ashes were laid up without the camp; for in the one was shown out our perfect cleansing before God in Christ, who has entered into the holiest, having offered one sacrifice for sins; in the other was shown out the provision for our cleansing in the world as often as uncleanness is contracted. It is important that uncleanness, as regards the objects for which this provision is made, should never be forgotten, while the perfection of cleanness itself marks all that is treasured up for us in Christ. In reference to these objects, the Lord further commanded thus: "And he that gathereth the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: and it shall be unto the children of Israel, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among them, for a statute for ever."

In the grace of God, the stranger is here associated with the children of Israel. The richest of Israel's blessings in redemption were enjoyed by the stranger, in common with them. The stranger might keep the passover to the Lord, if he were circumcised, and be as one born in the land. When an offering was made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord, then the stranger had all liberty in thus approaching the Lord. “If a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever be among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord, as ye do, so he shall do. One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you” (Num. xv. 14—16). God will receive any who come to Him through Christ, but He will receive none in any other way.

“DOST THOU BELIEVE ON THE SON OF GOD?”

JOHN ix. 35.

BELIEVER in Christ is a Christian. A Christian is one whose trespasses are all forgiven (Col. ii. 13). If any one, calling himself a Christian, denies this, with false humility thrusts it from him, and refuses to own that his sins are forgiven, he thereby *renounces the character of a Christian* as it is drawn in the Scriptures of truth. By Christ, all *who believe* ARE justified (Acts xiii. 38, 39). Christians are exhorted to forgive one another because God for Christ's sake hath forgiven them (Eph. iv. 32). They are bidden not to grieve the Holy Spirit, not, however, for

fear He should forsake them for ever, but because He hath sealed them unto the day of redemption (Eph. iv. 30).

"He that believeth not *is condemned already*, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John iii. 18). "He that believeth not God, hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; *that ye may know that ye have eternal life*" (1 John v. 10—13). It is not presumption, then, for one who knows and feels what sin is, and what it has done for him, and who also *believes the record of God*, to say that *he knows* that he has eternal life, for *God says so!* God's word, and not what we feel, or experience, or do, is the warrant for believing, and, *in believing*, the truth which we do believe is demonstrated in the conscience *to be truth*, and we set to, we affix, our seal, that God is true (John iii. 33); and the consequence is, that, "being justified by faith, *we have peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). The *presumptuous* person is he who, when he knows what God *has said*, does not believe Him!

"Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"

C. P.

JOB, A TYPE OF CHRIST.

THE history of Job is a type of the Saviour, as well in his sufferings as in the glory which followed. What is specially worthy of our attention is the burning desire felt by Satan for the ruin of the "*much*

persecuted" (the meaning of the name Job), against whom he stirs up enemies from all sides.

If Job's imperfect and needy righteousness was an object of such hatred to Satan, how must he be enraged against Him who is the absolutely righteous One. Immediately after entering on his vocation, the Redeemer was tempted forty days by the devil, and when the devil had ended all his temptations, he departed from Him "for a season." Satan is always in the background of Christ's sufferings. When the time drew nigh that He should be delivered into the hands of sinners, He exclaimed, "The prince of this world cometh." But as Satan was put to shame by the typical Job, so did his attack on the Anti-type end in his utter overthrow.—*Hengstenberg*.

FAITH AND ASSURANCE.

DO speak a little to the point of assurance as attainable by the Christian in this life. We admit that faith may be where assurance is not. If I have really taken God at his word and embraced the mercy proposed to me in his Son, it is thereby mine; and, further, a conviction that I have, so done is necessary to beget in me a comfortable *persuasion* that it is mine. Such a persuasion there cannot be without a *consciousness* by the soul, of its own act of *believing*. Now it must be quite clear that the faith itself by which I am saved, and the perception by my own mind of the existence of that faith, are *distinct* acts; and to confound the two is highly injurious; for it makes salvation to depend not upon the soul's believing in Christ, but upon believing something about itself, namely, that it does so believe.—*Goode on the Better Covenant.* ;

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—VII.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: and both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine; and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."—John ii. 1—11.

THE occurrence narrated in the foregoing paragraph, memorable in itself, is rendered additionally interesting by the fact noted in the eleventh verse, that it was the first of our Lord's miracles. The evangelist calls our attention to this circumstance, not simply, as we judge, for the sake of marking the priority of date. The first wonderful work is, as the first, representative and significant. It speaks for all the rest that are to follow. The beginning of a magnificent series, it reveals at once the character of the whole. In this aspect, it may be instructively compared with the first of those awful wonders that opened a way for Israel's out-going from Egyptian bondage. Then judgment smote—now mercy speaks. There water ran blood—here water flows wine. The keynote of the melody of our Lord's beneficent and blessed

life, and of the age He introduced, is thus struck, and the sound is gladness—life the stream of which is pre-eminently joy, and its service distinguishingly song. Set by John in the commencement of the narrative of our Lord's public ministry, the miracle in Cana seems to say, "This the Christ comes to do, to give life more abundantly—life, moreover, which in its first outflow shall have its course here on earth, and among the relationships and obligations of this present state of being; sweetening, elevating, beautifying all, and making everything that this world still enjoys from God shine and sparkle with a new delight."

By this beginning of miracles the evangelist informs us the glory of Jesus was manifested forth. It was his glory as the Divine Saviour that was so displayed—the glory of power and grace. The voice which speaks in this great work of wonder is obeyed by the very forces of inanimate nature, and it speaks to bless. It is not surprising that the disciples, to whom had been so recently promised the vision of opened heavens, and of angelic ministers to wait on the Son of Man, should feel that here He shows Himself attended with more than the mightiest of created energies, and should anew, with confirmed persuasion and deepened impression, confess Him, in Nathanael's language, as the Son of God and King of Israel. Oh, may the Spirit of truth lead us on in our meditations on this first story of miracle, so that we also may see in it the glory of Jesus, and believe on Him; if never before, then now; if before like the disciples, then now like them with a fuller, closer, and more loving reliance than ever.

It was on the third day from the date of Nathanael's confession of his Lord that Jesus, accompanied by his disciples—probably those five mentioned in the foregoing chapter—arrived in the course of his northward journey at the little town of Cana of Galilee. There is a

village still bearing this name (Kâna-el-Jelîl), about eight or nine miles from Nazareth, which, in all probability, is to be identified with the place named in the Gospel. On the day mentioned there was a marriage in the town, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there; not simply as an invited guest, however, but as a relative, probably, of one or other of the parties, and entrusted with hospitable charges on the occasion; for her position, from the narrative of what occurred at the feast, was evidently one of some responsibility. She could not otherwise have had knowledge of the exhaustion of the stock of wine or have expressed so much concern about it. On her account, we might say, Jesus was invited to the festival; but on his account, his disciples were also called. It is not likely that all of them could be acquainted with the family of the bridegroom or bride so as to be included in the circle of guests on their own account. Jesus must therefore have been known as having begun to teach and attract disciples to himself. We may therefore say that not solely for his relationship to Mary, but as one whom the parties desired to honour, his presence was sought at the nuptial festival. Thus viewed, the invitation to Jesus is a pleasing indication of their characters. Happy are those who desire Christ's company in their seasons of joy! But will the Master go to a wedding? Had the question been proposed of the Messiah beforehand, it is probable that the answer by most of us would have been, "No." The fact that even with the example of the Saviour before their eye, his professed followers should, in so many cases, have judged ascetic seclusion to be a higher and holier life than active discharge of social duties, betrays the tendency to mistake on this head lying in the human heart. It is hardly questionable that antecedently we should have concluded that the Messiah would come as his forerunner, and his walk, by remoteness from common ways, be a protest against the frivolities of time. But no,

the Son of Man came eating and drinking, came to meet and vanquish evil as it insinuates itself to us in the ordinary affairs of daily life, and to show how that every-day life may and should be holy to the Lord. So we find Him at the nuptial feast, doubtless as at other times, carrying with Him the sacredness of his own holy presence, and engaging in the work of his heavenly Father; but mingling with men even in their festive hours, and sanctioning, by a new and signal honour, his own institution of marriage. The seducing spirits, predicted to arise, that should "forbid to marry" have sufficient answer in this simple fact.

The wedding festivals of those times were prolonged for days. After the feast on the present occasion had been held for some time, the stock of wine failed. Possibly a greater number of guests than had been expected eventually attended. It seems no improbable conjecture that the presence of Jesus had attracted many, and that Oriental hospitality had given all a welcome. No store of wine had been provided for so large a company, and the supply became exhausted. In this emergency Mary applied to Jesus. She did so evidently in expectation that He would be able to aid. But how could that be? He could purchase no fresh store for them. The conclusion seems just, that she expected miraculous interference; and if so, we may further infer that Jesus had previously in some way indicated to his mother that He should begin to manifest his glory on this very occasion. He had probably conferred on her the privilege of knowing beforehand that mighty signs were to accompany his appearing to Israel, and that the series was about to begin. Now, therefore, she thought with herself, is a fitting opportunity for his wonder-working power; and in the spirit of expectation she went to Him saying, "They have no wine."

Our Lord's reply is very remarkable. In regard to the question, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" it

would be equally erroneous to conclude that it conveys no reproof, and to regard the reproof contained as harsh and severe. There is no reproach in the term, "Woman." It was a common title of address to persons of the greatest distinction, quite as respectful as "Madam" or "Lady" among ourselves. If it were needful to prove this, surely it would be enough to remember that when Jesus from the cross was commending his mother to the care of his beloved disciple, he employed in speaking to her this very compellation; "Woman," He said, "behold thy son." Further, to remove the idea of harshness from the words of our Lord, it should be noted that the reproof was not felt by Mary to be repulse. Yet, gentle and faithful reproof there was. The question, which should rather be rendered, What hast thou to do with me? (see Luke iv. 34, where also read preferably, What hast thou to do with us?) conveyed an intimation to Mary, that as a public teacher, Jesus, though her son, was not under her authority, nor needed He suggestions from her. He had been subject to her long, and listened with filial love and reverence to her counsels, but now that subjection had ceased; or rather, could never have extended to the work He came to do in his Father's name, as the Prophet and Priest of Israel. Jesus, therefore, claims to be sole Judge of the fitting season for working his wonders before men. "Mine hour," He said, meaning the time He had fixed on as the proper moment, "is not yet come." For that time Mary should have waited, assured that it would be the best—neither late nor premature. How prone are God's children, even where his promise gives undoubted assurance of seasonable help, to urge Him in childlike impatience to hasten intervention. How important is the counsel, "Wait on the Lord."

When our Lord says, "Mine hour is not yet come," the word appears to indicate a purpose to help at the proper

moment. Undoubtedly Mary, from that word or some other not here recorded, or from the Speaker's look, gathered the sure expectation of his timely interposition, for she immediately gave directions to the servants to observe his commands; herself, meanwhile, ceasing to suggest or recommend aught to Him, but thoughtfully adding this new saying to those others she had long laid up and pondered in her heart. What interval of time elapsed before the Lord addressed the servants, we are not informed; but as, doubtless, on the one hand, He interposed before the failure of the wine could be discovered by the guests, so, on the other, He did so at the moment when it should be most impressively shown that the help rendered was from God. The mode of interposition, also, made this clear. No possible room is left by the account for thought of collusion, or contrivance, or illusion. All is done calmly, deliberately, in the presence of sufficient witnesses, nay, by their hands, so far as hands can do it; and the result is attested by public and, so to say, official declaration. There lay at hand six large stone vats, used for the various ablutions practised by the Jews, capable of containing, in our measure, some twenty gallons apiece. These our Lord directed the servants to fill with water, and they filled them to the brim; and as they finished their task, they could all see that nothing but water was there, and that there was no room for introducing aught else. Then the Master said, "Draw out now, and bear to the governor of the feast," an elected guest, or appointed upper servant, whose duty it was to see the tables provided and the company entertained—to exercise, in short, the hospitality of the house. Observe that our Lord does not describe beforehand the miracle to be wrought. He only, by bidding the servants bear to the governor of the feast, indirectly suggests the impending change. But as the servants drew, the pure water reddened into wine; and

when the governor of the feast, as was his duty before placing it upon the tables, tasted the wine, not knowing whence it was, he was so much struck with the excellence of its quality, that he could not forbear calling the bridegroom, and complimenting him upon an arrangement unusual and remarkable, which had reserved wine so good for that period of the feast. The testimony, in the circumstances, was equally impartial and emphatic. The servants who knew the source of that approved wine, would hear the commendation with wonder, and know the certainty and completeness of the striking miracle.

Two difficulties have been raised in connexion with the narrative; one from the quantity of wine produced, the other from the words of the governor of the feast; both seeming hard to solve in consistency with that holy distance from all encouragement to intemperance which must have belonged to the sinless One. The six water-pots, it has been computed, must have contained in all not less than 120 gallons of liquor: could a quantity of wine so enormous be for strength and not for drunkenness? But when the question is put, either by cavilling unbelief or stumbling faith, various circumstances are overlooked. The feast was probably yet to last for days. The number of guests was, in all probability, large. It is not necessary to suppose that all the wine was consumed; nor does the provision of abundance charge the Provider with the sin of those who may abuse it. But besides these satisfactory considerations, we venture to remark that there is no evidence that all the water in the vats was converted into wine. The change, it seems to us, took place in the act of drawing, and what remained in the store, and much might remain, was water only. If this view be correct, there might be something like a continuous miracle throughout the remainder of the feast. So of old, by the same divine and gracious power, the widow of Sarepta's

cruse of oil failed not through long months of famine; and that other Israelitish widow's pot of oil stayed not its outpouring till every vessel of her borrowed store was filled.

Looking next at the difficulty found in the words of the governor of the feast, it is proper to note for what purpose his testimony is recorded. It is to show unimpeachably the reality of the miracle, as also to impress us with the thought that this work of God, like all others, is perfect of its kind. But do not the words of the governor appear to imply that at such feasts intemperate participation was usual? Does he not speak of the guests having well drunk, so that their palates are blunted, and their taste incapable of discerning inferiority of supply? We have put the questions in a form which suggests the answer. Grant that such immoderate use was customary, and is here described—although the word rendered “well drunk” does not necessarily imply inebriation, but such participation as has satisfied and made a man less critical of quality—but grant, we say, that use too free was common, and was now alluded to, it will not follow that such in-sobriety was ministered to on the present occasion. Might we not rather say, as there was contrast in the later supply of wine, so there was in the guests for whom it was provided. That good wine was for palates undisturbed by immoderate indulgence. And may we not be too careful to show that defensible which the evangelist does not seem to think needs defence? It is at least worthy of remark, how fearlessly the story is told as it is—in unconsciousness or calm defiance of all suspicion or cavil. To John there is nothing visible in the transaction but his Lord's manifested glory. His character, though his enemies did call him wine-bibber, needed no vindication nor explanation—sheathed in mail of matchless sanctity.

Thus it was that in the beginning of miracles Jesus showed forth his glory. All his wonderful works were

at once signs and parables. They proved his mission, and they symbolized his salvation. When He gave the blind their sight, and raised the dead, He was shown to be sent from heaven, and sent to give dark, dead souls light and life. So here; the power which made water, as one puts it, blush to wine, is divine power; whether you say, what else than water is in wine was then and there created, or, which alone is necessary, suppose that there was collection of matter already existing—comprehension and condensation of all the processes by which, through grape ripened and crushed, wine is usually produced. This is undoubtedly the finger of God. Then it is the finger of God revealed to bless. He who works this wonder comes to say, "Be of good cheer." An awful cup He comes Himself to drink, that He may fill ours with draughts of joy. He gives not only living water to men ready to perish for thirst, but gladdens them with wine. See how the invitation reads: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat: yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

In Jesus, therefore, as the divine joy-giver, let us all believe. Whatever be our earthly lot, let his favour be the portion of our cup. Let Him be the brightness of our prosperity, and the light of our adversity. It is well when we seek Christ's presence in the feast as truly as in the fast; when we go to sing at his feet as well as weep and sigh; when, in short, living our appointed life among present duties and relations we live with Christ, as we desire to die in Him.—The devout heart, in this connexion, will not be displeased to recollect how the Scripture speaks of another and far higher marriage-festival, where Jesus is not an invited guest, but Himself the celestial Bridegroom, and the banquet is spread in the halls of immortality. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage-supper of the Lamb."

THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

An outline of an Address delivered in the George-yard Ragged School and Church, Whitechapel.

"This is the way, walk ye in it."—Isaiah xxx. 21.

THE ONE WAY ONLY.—"I (Jesus) am the way."—John xiv. 6.

OUR DUTY.—"Walk in Him."—Col. ii. 6.

NAME OF THE WAY.—"The way of holiness."—Isaiah xxxv. 8.

"The good way."—1 Kings viii. 36.

OLD STYLE.—"Ye walked according to the course of this world."—Eph. ii. 2.

NEW STYLE.—"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked."—1 John ii. 6.

ASK FOR GUIDANCE.—"O Lord, make thy way straight before my face."—Psalm v. 8.

"Show me thy ways O Lord, teach me thy paths."—Psalm xxv. 4.

EIGHT DIRECTION POSTS.—"Walk *humbly* with thy God."—Micah vi. 8.

"Walk not after the *flesh*, but after the *spirit*."—Rom. viii. 1.

"Walk *circumspectly*, not as fools."—Ephes. v. 8.

"Walk in *wisdom*."—Col. iv. 5.

"Walk by *faith*, not by sight."—2 Cor. v. 7.

"Walk *worthy* of your *vocation*."—Ephes. iv. 1.

"Walk as *children* of the *light*."—Ephes. v. 8.

"Walk in *love*, as Christ also hath loved us."—Ephes. v. 2.

AFFLICTION, &c.—"When thou walkest through the *fire*, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."—Isaiah xliii. 2.

CAUTION.—"The devil walketh about seeking whom he may devour."—1 Peter v. 8.

FEAR HIM NOT.—“I will walk among you and be your God.”—Lev. xx. 12.

“My presence shall go with thee.”—Exodus xxxiii. 14.

ENCOURAGEMENTS.—“They who *wait* upon the Lord shall walk and not faint.”—Isaiah xl. 31.

“Though I walk in the *midst* of trouble, thou wilt revive me.”—Psalm cxxxviii. 7.

“No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.”—Psalm lxxxiv. 11.

“They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.”—Psalm lxxxix. 15.

“Blessed is every one who walketh in his ways.”—Psalm cxxviii. 1.

DEATH.—“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me.”—Psalm xxiii. 4.

THE REWARD.—“The saved shall walk in the light of it (the heavenly Jerusalem).”—Rev. xxi. 24.

“THEY SHALL WALK WITH ME IN WHITE.”—Rev. iii. 4.

W. J. LEWIS.

ISAAC'S LOVE OF VENISON.

“Isaac loved Esau because he did eat of his venison.”—Gen. xxv. 28.

THERE could be no sin in indulging this innocent taste, is one's first thought; nay, if the verse stood alone, we might imagine some even contending for Isaac's example, pleasing the flesh.

But this verse in Gen. xxv. 28, is the keystone to the 27th chapter, a chapter of sin throughout. Isaac's taste was the source of the devil's power; it was the origin of Isaac's fall.

Satan marks the weak point in the Christian's armour, he marks the carnal taste, and he turns it to account; it is

the point the devil brings his battery to bear upon, and the child of God falls.

Ah, dear believer, Satan is a keen opponent; hast thou a carnal worldly taste still nourished by *THEY*? Satan knows it, and he will wonderfully aid you in cultivating it.

Old Isaac loved venison, and he loved Esau who supplied him with it. Perhaps he reasoned in this way, "Am *I* not the representative of the coming church; ay, of the church itself; and does not Esau nourish *ME*, help *ME*, strengthen *MY* arms, and *MY* heart? Esau ought *INDEED* to have the blessing."

Dear reader, we are very liable to think that those who help us, help God, that those who give apparent strength to the hands of the church, strengthen Christ's cause. This is a sad fallacy. Are they causing the church to be more *spiritually* and *scripturally* minded? *THAT IS THE QUESTION.*

Unconverted people never can help the church in this matter; they may give to Isaac venison and strengthen his flesh and weaken his soul. They may give to Israel the flesh-pots of Egypt, and make them turn aside from heaven's manna. They may give to the saints of the present day influence, power, gifts, earthly presents, gold and silver ornaments, and thus pamper their venison taste. They may contribute to believers large collections, and enable them to build huge Roman-Catholic-looking buildings, beautiful windows to attract the eyes of those who should come to hear only the word of the Lord. Ay, they may do all these things, and we may, like old Isaac, love them for it, and resolve that they shall have a blessing from God for the blessings they have given to us. Alas! alas! their blessings to us are our curses, traps, devices, and the carnal or ignorant Christian falls into them.

This was the history of the church in the days of old Isaac. His "innocent taste" was *SATAN'S GAIN.*

This was the history of the church in the days of Constantine, when trial and persecution were taken away and Satan tried by contributions of carnality, Egyptian gifts, flesh-pots, venison, "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye," to entrap the Isaacs of the church, and many, many *fell*, and a huge superstructure of pride, carnal worship, and covetousness, which *is* idolatry, *arose*: their taste was SATAN'S GAIN.

This *is* the history of the church in 1862. Are we not loving various kinds of venison, and employing Esaus, because they are strong, to contribute venison? Dear reader, fear not to apply the rod to thyself. I need it; you need it. Paul on one occasion turned round in the midst of his foes and applied the correcting word of God to himself. He did not creep like a cowardly culprit into some little pet corner called an "excuse." Nay, he chastised himself before his foes (Acts xxiii. 5); thus asserting the MAJESTY of God's Word, his own fallibility, and leading his hearers to make frank confession of error also.

Poor old Isaac was bartering away the blessing. He practically said, "Give to me venison, Esau, and I will give to thee the blessing." He cruelly used poor Esau when he showed to Esau that he *loved* venison. Esau would say, "Surely I am one of the sons of God also. My father loves venison, so do I; he gives away the blessing for venison, so would I; I am as much a man of God in heart as my father; I need not to be changed."

Dear reader, if your worldly unconverted friends see in you a love to Egyptian follies, see carnal tastes, admiration of the world, or of the powerful Esaus of the world, they see stumbling-blocks in their way. Your tastes are their stumbling-blocks.

Stand out, dear brethren, as Caleb did. "Men famous in the congregation, men of renown" (Num. xvi. 2), stood

up, but Caleb "wholly" followed the Lord, in the face of all the powerful professing church of his day, and great was his blessing.

The world may pamper thy flesh, but it weakens thy soul; flesh-pots give expectation of comfort, but they sicken thy soul; feed on the manna, ask not for Egyptian flesh-pots; remember the apostle's words (Phil. iii. 17), "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an **EXAMPLE**, . . . for your conversation (or citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Let us, therefore, "press toward the mark," that we may know the Lord, and the power of his resurrection, and the **FELLOWSHIP** of his **SUFFERINGS**," let us not hesitate to pray this apostolic prayer (Phil. iii. 10).

GORDON FORLONG.

SANCTIFICATION.

I AM quite assured that sanctification of soul is more attained by an habitual sense of "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit," than by all other means, as means, put together. Therefore, to live upon the righteousness of Christ, as righteous *in Him*, and as such to look up to God as a Father, and walk with Him as such, is the most effectual means of keeping down our manifold corruptions. Our watchfulness therefore is chiefly to avoid whatever weakens faith; to pursue whatever strengthens it; and these two points take in the whole circuit of Christian duty.—*Extract from a Letter by Rev. J. H. Evans.*

THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID.

"James answered saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets: as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."—Acts xv. 13—17.



UCH was the reason assigned by James at the Council of Jerusalem, for refusing to allow the imposition of the Mosaic law upon the Gentile converts.

But what bearing on the subject can the quotation from Amos have? Let us consider it. "The tabernacle of David" cannot well mean the kingdom of David, as "the throne of David" is the ordinary and appropriate expression of that idea. David did not himself dwell in a tabernacle, or tent, as his own words testify—"See now I dwell in an house of cedars, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains" (2 Sam. vii. 2).

But the tent which David pitched for the ark, when he had brought it up from the house of Obbedom (2 Sam. vi. 17), and in which the ark rested during his reign, for about thirty years, until Solomon's time (2 Chron. i. 4), might well deserve the name of *the tabernacle of David*, inasmuch as it connected with his name and reign a form of worship of a peculiar kind, differing as well from that of the tabernacle of Moses before, as from that of the temple of Solomon afterward.

The peculiarity of this system of worship consisted in the separation of "the ark" from "the tabernacle of the congregation;" the latter remained at Gibeon (2 Chron. i. 3), the priests and Levites ministering thereat (1 Chron. xvi. 39), while David kept the ark at Zion, in a tent,

appointing a chosen band of attendants (Asaph and his brethren) to carry on the service connected with it, which seems principally to have been a service of song and instrumental music, expressive of praise and thanksgiving.

This worship of David thus became a striking type of that which the gospel dispensation has brought in—immediate access to the presence of God, apart from the burdensome ceremonial of an earthly priesthood. David could “sit before the Lord (2 Sam. vii. 18), and pour out his heart in praise and thanksgiving,” while before him stood the *Ark of the Covenant*, containing the tables of the covenant—typifying Christ the only law-fulfiller and righteousness of his people, “in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him.”

The priestly and Levitical ceremonial was not during this time abolished nor even suspended, it remained in full force at Gibeon; it was only kept separate for a time in order to allow a foreshadowing of a more glorious system of spiritual worship which “the Son of David” should introduce.

So at present, though believers enjoy the privilege of “David’s tabernacle,” *i.e.*, access to God without priestly mediation, we cannot say that the priesthood has been abolished or suspended—it has only been transferred from type to antitype, from shadow to substance, from earth to heaven. We who have come to Mount Zion (Heb. xii. 22), “to a throne of grace” (Heb. iv. 14—16), have also “a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens.”*

Such a system of worship, peculiar to “the tabernacle of David,” could not but strike the minds of the thoughtful

* It is worth observing that Gibeon means “hill,” from a root signifying “height.” May not the existence of David’s tabernacle at Zion, while the tabernacle of priestly service was at *Gibeon*, have been intended to point to a worship like David’s to be carried on, when the priestly service was being transacted in the height of “heaven itself”?

in Israel; and when the Lord, by the mouth of the prophet Amos, spoke of restoring and again setting up "the tabernacle of David," that the "residue of men might seek after the Lord," it would seem natural to conclude (as did James) that this ordained such a state of things as the Council of Jerusalem were called on solemnly to sanction, viz., that Gentile believers might have access to God's presence, there to worship, in and through Christ, without having imposed upon them the burden of the law of Moses.

B.

THE WATER OF SEPARATION.—II.

THE Lord also reveals the character of uncleanness for which provision is thus made: it is not the radical uncleanness of a dead man, but the contracted uncleanness of a living man because of touching that which is dead or connected with the dead. "He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days." Death being the consequence of sin, the dead *in sin* become a source of uncleanness. With us now the living are they who live by the faith of the Son of God (Gal. ii. 20). "The hour now is when the dead hear the voice of the Son of God and live" (see John v. 24—26). "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life" (1 John v. 11—12). In the discernment of him that is spiritual, he should have communion with God as to the condition of those around him, as alive or dead, judging all things according to their relationship to Christ. It is not only outside ourselves, in reference to other people, that this is so, but also with respect to the flesh in ourselves, as says the apostle, "Who shall deliver me from

the body of this death? (or, from this body of death?)" It was to cleanse from the uncleanness of this unclean association, that the water of separation was provided. "He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean."

God has graciously made provision for cleansing us from all uncleanness, but He has made none at all for allowing us to continue in it. "If he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean. Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel; because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean: his uncleanness is yet upon him." In reference to the day of atonement (Lev. xvi.) there is nothing said about *three* days, or *seven* days, but "*on that day* shall the priest make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (Lev. xvi. 30).

In this was a type of the one offering of Christ, by which He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified (see Heb. x.). The sinner who is found in a lost state, is by the one offering of Christ at once and for ever saved through faith in Him. In the water of separation is the type of the manner of our cleansing from the uncleanness by which the living are affected by the dead; and this has its course as marked by the seven days; and that the uncleanness is not allowed is marked by the third day.

The blood was never brought twice in the year into the most holy place, but the water of separation was sprinkled as often as there was uncleanness from touching the dead body of a man. In this latter is a type of the present cleansing of those that are Christ's own; for no uncleanness at all is passed over. We must be cleansed from the uncleanness of touching the dead, as well as the unclean-

ness of death itself; for in this we once were. But in all this the saints are kept in unshaken confidence. Righteous confidence is maintained: the present joy of communion may be hindered, while the absence of it is mourned over before God; but his promise is that it shall be restored.

This is shewn in Num. ix. in connexion with the uncleanness of touching the dead body of a man. "And there were certain men who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day: and those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the Lord in his appointed season among the children of Israel? And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the Lord. The fourteenth day of the second month, at even, they shall keep it." Here we see that though present fellowship with their brethren was hindered, yet there was no casting off, or the least sense of it, but only a little patient waiting, and then they had their enjoyment too. It is important in all this to see that these men mourned over the condition they were in because of being defiled by the dead body of a man, for their desire was to keep the passover unto the Lord, and for them a gracious answer came,* but at the

* We further see the care of the Lord for those who in the consciousness that communion was hindered, mourned over it, and laid their case before the Lord. He told them that they should keep the passover on the *fourteenth day of the second month*, and it was on the *twentieth* day of that second month that the cloud was taken up, and that the children of Israel took their journeys (Num. x. 11): this just allowed seven days for those who kept the passover in the second month: thus the Lord in his patience waited on them, that all might go forward in blessing together.

same time the Lord pronounced the judgment of those who despised his passover, and cared not to keep the feast (see verse 13).

In the feast of the passover was the witness of the difference which the Lord put between the children of Israel and the Egyptians: the destroyer was not suffered to come into the houses of the Israelites to smite them: but among the Egyptians there was not an house where there was not one dead. There was much connexion between the dead body of a man and the condition of the Egyptians on that night, but none at all between it and the condition of the Israelites. There was no communion between touching the dead body of a man and keeping the passover: in the one is seen the wages of sin, but in the other the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Because we are unleavened, we are to put leaven away (1 Cor. v. 7), and because we are alive unto God, we must rise from among the dead.

Places, as well as people, may, in their associations, become affected by the dead, and thus become a cause of uncleanness. "This is the law when a man dieth in a tent; all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days. And every open vessel, which hath no covering bound upon it, is unclean." *A tent* is the place of sojourn and repose for the living, and the dead should not be there. The place proper to those who are alive unto God, should never have within it the presence of the dead. The house of God is the church of the living God; and when any within it give up the Son of God (for otherwise they would not die), they who live by Him must be cleansed from the uncleanness of the presence of such. In the man that died in the tent, there is a witness to the dominion of sin in him, and because of association with him, as in the same tent, uncleanness is contracted, and therefore the witness and power of the

judgment of sin in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ is needed here, for this is the way of life and of ceasing from sin. "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless *I live*." "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."

When looked at in the aspect of vessels as receiving and containing, uncleanness is contracted if we are not shut up against the entrance of evil.

The open fields are also a place where uncleanness may be contracted. There is a difference between the circumstances of the tent and of the open fields: the man in the tent *dies*, but the man in the open fields is *slain with the sword*; for the world is the place of positive judgment. They who are alive unto God, can have no part with those that lie under his righteous judgment. There is also a difference between the tent and the open fields, as to the cause of uncleanness. In the tent you are identified with what is there; and if you are *in* the tent when or where one dies, then you become unclean; but in the open fields you are not unclean unless you *touch* a dead body. In the world where the dead are, we are clean while separated from them; but in the church—the place for the living alone—the presence of the dead affects those that are there (1 Cor. v. 9—13). In the open fields of this wide world, where the name of Christ is renounced by many, we may walk in separation from such and be clean; but in the church, when the name of Christ is despised by any, then all are affected thereby: one dies in the place where all should be alive, and in the enjoyment of fellowship in life: sin thus reigns in the individual who dies in the place where grace should be found reigning through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord: when this is so, the place and all in it must be purified by the cleansing Word, and by the Spirit of life that testifies

to the judgment of sin in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another cause of uncleanness is *the bone of a man*. We should not only keep separate from those whom God has taught us to estimate as dead, but also from such *relics* as connect themselves with the persons of the dead: * all remaining associations partake of their uncleanness. In this there is great need of circumspection, the bone of a man may not be so easily discerned as his dead body; and so after separation from the dead themselves, we need also to separate from that which remains of them. We should take heed that we do not allow those remaining associations which God has forbidden, as rendering us unclean.

A grave also renders him unclean who touches it. A grave is the place of the dead. The *grave* is opposed to the *tent*: you may be *in* the tent without uncleanness unless the dead are there; but you cannot touch a grave without uncleanness, because the dead must be there. It is important for us to distinguish between the place proper to those who live by the faith of the Son of God, and the place only proper to those who are dead in sins.

In all this the saints are called into a very holy separation from them that know not Christ. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel (an unbeliever)? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will

* In Ezek. xxxix. the connexion is marked between the bone of a man and his dead body; after the burying of Gog and all his multitude, the passengers that passed through the land, when they saw a man's bone, were to set up a sign by it, till the buriers had buried it in the valley of Hamongog.

dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and *touch not the unclean thing*; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

"THE WITNESS IN HIMSELF."

"He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself."—
1 John v. 10.

NOW often is this text misapplied! It is constantly quoted to encourage the notion, that without some inward feeling (supposed to be the Spirit's witness), no one can be sure that he is a believer in the Son of God.

That the Spirit does bear witness with the believer's spirit that he is a child of God (Rom. viii. 16), is a truth which no one can gainsay; but it is a great mistake to suppose that we are to wait, before believing, until we feel the evidence that we do believe.

The text most often misapplied, to lead the anxious soul to look for some "witness within" instead of looking out of self altogether to "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," is that quoted at the head of this article. It is hoped that a little consideration of the passage will clearly show that it has nothing whatever to say to such a process of self-inspection.

To understand ver. 10, we must commence at ver. 9, and go to the end of ver. 12.

"If we receive the *witness* of men the *witness* of God is greater, for this is the *witness* of God which He hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the *witness* in himself; he that believeth not God

hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the *witness* that God gave of his Son. And this is the *witness* that God hath given unto us, eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

In the two last places where the word witness occurs, it is rendered "record" in our translation; but it is the same word all through in the Greek (*μαρτυρία*).

We can thus see at a glance that the witness, spoken of six times in this passage, cannot be taken in one place in a sense inconsistent with that in which it is used in the other five. Now, to make it mean, in ver. 10, the inward witness of the Spirit (as is so often done), is irreconcilable with what is said elsewhere in the same passage—for instance, that it is "the witness of God which He hath testified of his Son." Again, "the witness that God gave of his Son." And lest there should be any mistake on the subject, we have an express definition of what is meant by the witness—"and this is the witness that God hath given to us, eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

But what then—it may be asked—if this be admitted, can be the meaning of "He that believeth in the Son of God hath the witness in himself"?

Why, clearly, it must mean, if we are to interpret the passage consistently, he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness (that testimony of God spoken of all through) *in his own case, or as to himself*.

It is because God has borne witness to the security in his Son of those who believe in Him—that they who believe in Him have this testimony *as to themselves, in their own cases*. For a believer, therefore, to doubt God's word (which, as a believer, must apply to him), is to make Him a liar.

This striking method of convincing a believer, not only of the privilege but also of the duty of assurance, falls in with the expressed design (ver. 13) of the whole passage, if not indeed of the whole Epistle: "These things have

I written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God, *that ye may know that ye have eternal life.*"

It is one thing to believe in Christ, another to believe what *God* says about me as a believer in Christ. I may believe in the Son of God, and so have eternal life; but I may doubt that I have it. Why? Because I am (though believing in Christ) not believing what God says about Him and those who believe in Him, and therefore it is said, "He that believeth not God (observe, it is not said, the Son of God, for it is of a believer in the Son of God that this is spoken) hath made Him a liar," &c.

Here, then, is contemplated the case of a believer in Christ, who does not credit God's testimony about his Son and those who believe in Him. There is nothing said about unconverted unbelievers (though the text is often quoted as if it referred to such); the subject is the assurance to which *believers* are entitled, and the lack of which is put in the light of a refusal to credit God's word. It is, doubtless, strong language, but not stronger than the circumstances justify. God has borne a certain witness or testimony concerning those who trust in his Son: if they who trust in Him put from them God's testimony concerning them as unworthy of credit—however strong the statement may be—they in fact make God a liar.

It remains to show that no violence is done to the original in thus rendering "*hath the witness in himself*" *hath the witness in his own case, or to himself.*

The Greek will bear it, as may be seen by looking at the original of Matt. xvii. 12; Mark xiv. 6; Luke xxii. 37; xxiii. 31; 1 Cor. iv. 6; 1 Cor. ix. 15. The latter two texts are rendered by Winer (*Grammar of New Test.* 48), *in my case*. See also Alford on 1 Cor. ix. 15.

And even if the Greek idiom did not bear it, it is worthy of notice that in Hebrew the verb or noun for *witness* is found followed by the preposition ז (rendered in the LXX.

ὅς) which governs the object of the witness. Thus in Joshua xxiv. 27, this stone shall be a witness unto (ὅς) us, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord, which He spake unto us: it shall therefore be a witness unto you (ὅς ὑμῶν) lest ye deny your God."

As, therefore, both the Hebrew and Greek idioms admit of the rendering given; as, moreover, it accords with the whole scope of the passage, and especially with the design expressed by the apostle of writing to believers in the Son of God that *they may know that they have eternal life*; there seems to be little reason to doubt that this is the true meaning of the passage.

Observe, in conclusion, the importance of rightly applying this passage. It cannot be right to apply it, as so many do, to the case of the unconverted. The promise of eternal life is always connected with believing, *i.e.*, trusting in Christ. God has not given any testimony to an unbeliever that he hath eternal life; it is to those who believe in the Son that He has so spoken. The word to the unbeliever is, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

The moment, however, that the sinner casts himself upon Jesus, that moment he is entitled to assurance, that moment he becomes one of those concerning whom God has borne testimony that they have eternal life. He has this testimony now *as to himself—in his own case*. To doubt God's word now would be to make Him a liar; for God has said of every one who trusts in his Son, that He hath given *him* eternal life.

The conclusion is, that no unbeliever is entitled to assurance until he believes; and, on the other hand, there is no believer but is entitled to assurance when once he does believe.

H. E. B.

RESPONSIBILITY AND POWER.

NOW much controversy amongst Christians would be avoided, if the simple and obvious distinction between *responsibility* and *power* were borne in mind.

The hyper-Calvinist confounds the two when he says, that because man has no power to believe or to repent, *therefore* he is under no responsibility either to repent or to believe the gospel.

On the other hand the Arminian equally loses sight of the distinction between the two, when he argues that as man is responsible, he must also possess power.

The Scripture doctrine on this subject seems to be that man is responsible for obedience to any command which God may give; and, therefore, is responsible for repentance and faith. For "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts xvii. 30.) "Repent ye and believe the gospel" (Mark i. 15). "Taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 8).

But at the same time, man has no power in himself either to repent or to believe. This is not owing to God, who created man upright, but to sin. Man is by nature "*dead in trespasses and sins.*"

From God, therefore, must come the power. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, *for to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins*" (Acts v. 31).

"Unto you *it is given* in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, &c. (Phil. i. 29).

"Lydia, . . . whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul" (Acts xvi. 14).

What would be thought of a tenant who should make his inability to pay rent (the result of his own extravagance) a claim to be considered exempt from responsibility to meet the just demands of his landlord?

His landlord might say, "Your want of power is no fault of mine. I set you up well at the beginning; I gave you a farm amply sufficient to make your position, with common diligence, an independent one. Your own folly and idleness have caused you to be penniless, but you are not the less responsible to me for the rent you cannot pay."

Would the hyper-Calvinist say to such a man, "You cannot pay, therefore you are not responsible?"

Would the Arminian say, "You are responsible, therefore you must possess the power to pay what your landlord claims?"

The first would be contrary to truth.

The second would be as contrary to fact.

Would that evangelists in the present day remembered this distinction; and while, on the one hand, they justly condemn the attempts of some to evade responsibility by pleading lack of power, that they would, on the other hand, give to God the glory due to his holy name in being the only and alone cause of the faith and repentance of his children.

"For by grace are ye saved, through faith (*and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God*), not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephes. ii. 8, 9.) H. E. B.

THE STUDY OF GOD'S WORD must form the believer's *standing* exercise, his *staple* occupation. This turned into prayer brings his Captain down to his help, and brings the poor believer also near to God. He seldom does any great thing for his people without prayer.

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—VIII.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days. And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said. Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man."—John ii. 12—25.

THE most wonderful things are not always those which soonest strike us with astonishment. It was indeed a marvellous display of the Redeemer's glory that the disciples witnessed in Cana, when, at his word, water was drawn out wine, and the record of it awakes our admiration at once; but there is not less of his majesty in the occurrence related in the passage now before us. We may not call this incident a miracle, but it is something really higher. Effects in the realm of mind and heart, rightly understood, are grander things than those which are wrought in the mere kingdom of matter. Our Lord Himself promised to his apostles power to do

"greater works" than his own mighty deeds; and the promise was fulfilled in the conversion of souls and the revolution of a world by their ministry. Results are being accomplished in our own day by the preaching of the gospel, which manifest a present God more wonderfully than miracles themselves. So the cleansing of the temple courts by the humble Nazarene was as full of divine glory as the transmutation of water at the marriage festival, which led the disciples to marvel and believe.

The twelfth verse gives us a transition link connecting the two occurrences, both in regard to the sequence of time and the order of thought. The miracle in Cana proclaimed the hour arrived when the private life of Jesus was to pass into public manifestation of his glory. The verse in question leads us to another step in his outgoing from seclusion to the performance of his great work as the Redeemer of Israel. For a few days we see Him at Capernaum, still surrounded by his mother and brethren, as if he were yet one of the family of Nazareth; but to show that He is now sustaining a new character, He has his disciples with Him, and He is almost immediately to go up with them to Jerusalem. There another wonderful work is to show that the joy which the miracle in Cana proclaimed the Christ come to bestow, is yet holy joy. The happiness of men shall be in consistency with the honour of God; the elevation of the every-day life shall harmonize with the purification of worship; He who blesses the home shall hallow the temple too. The miracle in Cana showed Jesus to be Lord over the material world—the transaction in Jerusalem proclaimed Him supreme in the church; together, these occurrences are a repetition of the prophetic word, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth."

It is hardly possible for one tolerably familiar with Old Testament scripture to follow our Lord from Capernaum to Jerusalem on the present occasion without thinking of

the words of Malachi (iii. 1—3): "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple; and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." In the appearance of the Master in the temple courts, and his expulsion thence of the profane traffic which desecrated the hallowed precincts, we have an almost literal verification of the prophetic oracle. But they not only verify, they repeat, in a new form, the ancient prediction. The transaction in Jerusalem, now drawing our attention, was a parable in our Lord's life, exhibiting one grand purpose of his coming—the purgation and renovation of his church; a purpose declared by his forerunner in burning words, embodying a different image but teaching the same truth, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner: but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Comprehensive and far-reaching description! stretching from the first purification of the temple in Jerusalem till the hour of final judgment, when the Lord "shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity,"—tares for the flame.

The occasion of the Saviour's journey to Jerusalem was the recurrence of the paschal solemnity. But he went up at this time to do more than simply "fulfil all righteousness" by observance of the divine institution. At this feast commenced that public course, which was soon at the like feast to close. His disciples accompanied Him to the scene—perhaps also his mother and brethren—since the expression is, "*they* continued there not many days." Of the disciples alone, however, have we mention afterwards. On coming to Jerusalem, Jesus repaired at once to the temple, and found it converted into a market-place. The particular portion of the sacred structure thus perverted to

purposes of traffic was; doubtless, the outer, or Gentile court; a circumstance rendering our Lord's action yet more significant. By asserting the hallowed character of that outermost court of the nations, might He not be indicating the arrival of the hour when the true temple of the Lord was to be raised from all peoples and tongues? Henceforth the whole earth was to be consecrated. The profanation of this part of the temple precincts had grown up not without pretext of convenience and utility for the very purposes of the temple. To meet the wants of the numerous worshippers at the time of the paschal feast, vast numbers of cattle, and sheep, and doves, for the supply of sacrificial victims, were yearly congregated in Jerusalem; but were they not all, in a sense, sacred, and could merchandise in what was to be offered to the Lord be reckoned otherwise than itself almost holy? So, by degrees, probably, and under the shadow of such defence as we have suggested, the practice had grown up, till at length, with connivance, or perhaps sanction, of the rulers, it had swollen to a tide of systematic and open desecration. To the traffic in beasts, for the accommodation of the many worshippers from foreign countries that flocked to Jerusalem at the great feast, there had been added the tables of the money-changers; and the whole place, when the Lord came, was filled with the noise, confusion, and chafferings of a mart. He stepped into the midst of the scene, and was moved with holy zeal. But what can one poor man do? Unknown, alone, without influence, how can he confront this Babel? Nay, with right and God on his side, even one mere man may do much; but one greater than man, though his guise be lowly, is now present, and all shall confess his power. Twining a scourge from the ropes, or cords (perhaps of rushes), that had been employed to fasten the cattle or the birds, and bearing this in his hand as a token of authority, or using it to urge the

cattle forth, He expelled the droves and the dealers from the sacred enclosure, saying, as He bade the sellers of doves carry them away (the birds could not otherwise have been removed), make not my Father's house a house of merchandise. "My Father's house!" This, then, is the Son of God who speaks; and by this fact the result is explained. No resistance, not even, it would seem, to the amount of remonstrance, was offered; a power not to be opposed was on the hearts of the traffickers; and even when the hand of the Reprover overturned the money-tables, and poured the money on the ground, covetousness itself, in silent submission, hastened to gather the scattered pieces, and depart. Easily, ignominiously, yet forbearingly He drove all forth—sheep, oxen, sellers, changers. The disciples, who saw the holy fervour of his countenance, and marked how He urged the motley crowd before Him, thought of the language of one of the psalms, and felt that it was being fulfilled in their Master. See the passage in its pathetic connection (Psalm lxi. 9). The words there describe a wasting of the holy Redeemer's frame, by life-long sufferings through fervid regard to his Father's honour—but the disciples applied them well to the scene before them. Did they at all wonder that the only flame there was of zeal? Ah, blessed forbearance, that restrained the fire of judgment, that might have consumed the profaners of the holy place. But "the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

There were other parties moved by the transaction, as well as the disciples. The Jews—by which phrase, as generally in John, understand to be meant the principal men—scribes, pharisees, rulers—had heard of (probably some of them had witnessed) the strange interference on the part of a poor Galilean, with a custom that had gone on for years, and they came to Jesus, asking a miraculous sign in token of his authority to exercise the functions of a

church-reformer. They did not consider that already a sign of the highest order had been given them in the very act they wished Him to justify himself for performing. Let them go to the deserted court of the Gentiles, and see the vindication. Let the calm and silence which have succeeded the tumult of the morning's market attest the authority of Him who wrought the change by his presence and his word. That whip of rushes may suffice as a sign, potent as the rod of Moses. The questioners shall have no other, at present. Yet a sign shall be given them. Our Lord, in reply to the demand they made, points them forward, as on another subsequent occasion, to the great fact of his resurrection, that grandest sign of the Christian faith. Not in plain words, however; but in terms most appropriate to the scene and occasion. They asked Him for his authority to cleanse the temple, he foretells a grand event by which He will remodel and rebuild the temple, "Destroy this temple," He said, "and in three days I will raise it up." Most memorable and significant words, though not then understood even by his own disciples! The evangelist explains that "He spake of the temple of his body." Then God dwelt there; and He who promised to raise his own dead body could himself be no less than God. The language further implied a prediction that the Jews would put the speaker to death, as it expressly uttered a prediction that, in that case, He would by his own power rise again the third day. The words were afterwards produced, with distortion and addition, by the witnesses suborned to procure his condemnation, and applied literally to the sacred edifice. Was the application unnatural? Did not the Lord say, "this temple"? Yes, but without supposing that any gesture at the moment indicated the true reference, we may remark that the very phrase simply taken, must mean, from the Lord's lips, the temple nearest Him—*this* temple—not that

remoter temple of creation—nor that nearer earthly fane—but that nearest, as it was also the greatest,—the body of Emmanuel. If this conversation took place in the court of the Gentiles, now cleared, we may infer this application of the simple words the more confidently, that the term for *temple* is here different from that used in the fourteenth verse. It is here the sacred shrine itself, the sanctuary—the holy place and holiest of all. The natural and proper reference of Christ's words, "this sanctuary," would be in these circumstances immediately to himself, in whom God dwelt. But, further, with the death and resurrection of the Lord's body there were connected virtually the abolition and re-construction of the Jewish temple itself. Christ's death was the end of the law; the Mosaic economy to which the temple belonged was thereby abrogated; a new economy with a new and more glorious temple, resting on the foundation of Jesus's finished work, arose in its stead. That temple was opened for the worship of the nations when the buried Redeemer went forth living from the tomb. It was then, too, that the meaning of this prophecy by their Master broke on the disciples. After his resurrection, they remembered his saying, compared it with Scripture, and held fast the spoken and the written word with an intelligent and confirmed faith. Or, indeed, since we can hardly be said to believe that which we do not understand, we may say simply with the evangelist, they then believed both. The resurrection of Christ threw light on ancient Scripture—on that passage, for example, in the sixteenth Psalm cited afterwards by Peter on this very subject, and on his own prediction as well; and the disciples saw at once their import and their truth, and believed accordingly.

From the closing verses of the chapter we learn that, although at the request of the Jews, who sought a sign rather to excuse their unbelief than to warrant their faith,

Christ refused to work any present miracle, yet his presence at the feast was signalized by many mighty works. In the feast *day* (verse 23) means, throughout the festival. The miracles were not confined to a single day. The result was the faith of many. But we know from what follows that the "believing in his name" here spoken of was not the faith of true discipleship; it was a temporary conviction and confession of Christ's claims as sent from God. Nicodemus, in the next chapter, gives the creed of those believers. They were ready to follow Christ as a heavenly teacher, perhaps as the Messiah they looked for, but they misunderstood his character, and had no real attachment to his person. Jesus knew the carnality of their views and expectations, and the superficiality of their present professed acceptance of his cause. So he did not commit himself to them. The word, curiously, is the very term rendered "believed" in the previous sentence, as if we were to read, "Jesus did not believe them." One writer states it thus, "He put no faith in their faith." The meaning is, He did not entrust Himself to them; He did not act towards them as towards his real friends; He did not put himself in their power, or mingle familiarly with them as his followers; He never identified his cause with their espousal of it. His doing so would have injured them and hindered his own work. The reason for his keeping thus aloof from these seeming converts is put with great emphasis by the evangelist. He knew all,—all men, as our version has it, or all these professed disciples, and he so knew them by virtue of the omniscience that searches all hearts. He needed no testimony from others about the character of men; He read the secrets of souls for himself. It is to be specially noticed that the word in both clauses of verse 25 is "man," not "men." The term is thus universal, to teach us that what John here claims for his Lord is a knowledge of human nature as such, and of the hearts of the whole race.

The divine attribute of heart-searching omniscience could not be more distinctly declared to belong to Jesus. An example of his power to penetrate the within of man follows in the history of Nicodemus.

Let the reader, as we close, reflect—This Saviour knows me, knows my profession's worth. Happy, if so reflecting, he can think of proofs of Christ's acceptance and approval of it. Have we experience of such gracious entrusting of himself to us in loving fellowship, as makes us feel that He is treating us as friends? And have we the friends' badge? "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

THE WATER OF SEPARATION.—III.

THE Lord next reveals the way of cleansing the unclean in applying that which was laid up for him. "And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running (*or living*) water shall be put thereto in a vessel." The power of the death of Christ, and the Spirit of life, are thus connected in this cleansing power of God as applied to us. In the *ashes* of the red heifer, the remembrance of Christ's death and the abiding value of it were shown out as ever laid up for us; in the running (*or living*) water, the Spirit of life, as acting in the power of Christ's death in cleansing, was also foreshown. The ashes were not used without the running (*or living*) water; neither was the running water sprinkled without the ashes. The Spirit does not act in us for this cleansing apart from the death

of Christ, and the remembrance of the judgment of sin in Him. A false energy may be detected, if the power of the cross does not accompany it.

The sprinkling of the water of separation is not a type of the way of reconciling a sinner to God, in the forgiveness of his sins through the blood of Christ; but it is a type of the way of restoring us to communion with God in fellowship in life when it has been hindered by association with the dead. The way of reconciliation in the forgiveness of sins was foreshown in the sprinkling of the blood; but this other was foreshown in the sprinkling of the water—the living water to which the ashes were put, in which the blood was burned when all was burned outside the camp. On the day of atonement, the blood was sprinkled seven times *upon the mercy-seat*, and before the mercy-seat; and thus an atonement was made *on that day* that they might be clean from *all* their sins before the Lord: but when any were unclean by the dead, *then as often as it was so*, the water of separation was sprinkled *on the unclean*. In this ordinance of the red heifer, the judgment of sin in the offering of Christ is more singly shown out than in any other type of it in the sacrifices; for no part of it was eaten, no part of it was burned on the altar, but all was burned without the camp. Our cleansing from the uncleanness of the dead of this world, is in the sense of the heavy judgment of sin in the offering of Christ, and this by the energy of the Spirit in us.

The cleansing power of all this is further marked in the hyssop, which was before thrown by the priest into the burning, that in the ashes of the heifer the cleansing power of the death of Christ might be witnessed unto in its abiding value; so now again, when the water of separation was sprinkled on the unclean, the hyssop was again used to show this cleansing power in its application. "And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water,

and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave."

At the time of the burning, cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop, were thrown into the burning; but afterward, at the time of the sprinkling, hyssop only is used; and this, as a little shrub, is in contrast to the cedar as a stately tree. This contrast is marked in 1 Kings iv. 33. "He spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." With this little shrub that springeth out of the wall, the cleansing power provided of God was applied.

In the ashes of the heifer there was no display for the carnal eye; he who had communion with God in the intelligence of what was there, could apprehend the cedar and the scarlet there together with the hyssop; but it is not by the display of what is mighty and majestic, but in that which is still and small, that the Lord acts in this cleansing. The bunch of hyssop was what God chose to connect his power with in this cleansing, and a very plain lesson is taught to us by it in this pompous world full of its own display.

There are other occasions in which the power and lordship of Christ are shown out in cleansing, as in the cleansing of the leper and the leprous house (see Lev. xiv.), but with us now, when defiled by the dead and purifying ourselves, the orderings of the Lord for us are in connection with the humiliation of Christ in judgment in suffering for sin.

In all this service it is a clean person that is used of the Lord for the cleansing of the unclean: one unclean person is not used for the cleansing of another. This is important for the servants of Christ; they learn the pattern of their service in Christ himself. He who never was defiled washed his disciples' feet, and it was not until then that

He told them to wash one another's feet.* When we ourselves are under the power of an uncleanness which another is also under, our blessing is *first* to get ourselves clean; but if we first go to deal with the other, it may only be to make bad worse. The Lord calls him a hypocrite who goes to take the mote out of his brother's eye, when a beam is in his own eye (Matt. vii. 3—5); and again it is written, "Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?" (Rom. ii. 21). A word of warning and guidance is here given: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. iv. 16). The contrast to this is in those who, while they promise liberty to others, are themselves the servants of corruption; liberty is promised, but the thing ministered is their own corruption. We may be little aware how much others may be acted on through us, according to the power of the character which we ourselves may have. The holy apostle could say, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably, we behaved ourselves among you that believe" (1 Thess. ii. 10).

In this cleansing, the unclean person was first sprinkled with the water of separation, in which he was brought under the power of the judgment of sin in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and this in the way of *remembrance*; for it was the *ashes* in which the blood was burned, and that were *laid up* in a clean place, to which the living water was put. He was *sprinkled on the third day*,† for the

* On the day of atonement the blood could be sprinkled on the mercy-seat by the high-priest alone; but in cleansing from this uncleanness from the dead, the water of separation could be sprinkled by a clean person. Christ in his own perfectness is that clean person; but his servants, as themselves cleansed from their uncleanness, are also used in this service.

† *The third day* is used to mark the period of limit to Israel's humiliation.

uncleanness of death cannot be allowed to prevail; and on the seventh day,* for he must be fully brought under the power of this cleansing: and then "on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even." As walking in the Spirit, he thus subjects himself and his habits to the power of the cleansing Word of God, "hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."

The Lord again declares that this uncleanness cannot be allowed to pass: "The man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the Lord: the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean." So also when Christ washed his disciples' feet, his words were, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." We can have no fellowship in walk with Him, when the uncleanness of an unclean world is allowed to act on our spirits, and is passed over in our walk, and therefore He washed his disciples' feet. At that time He also taught them the abiding value of what had been already done, and not to be repeated, when he said, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." In this the true state of many will be tested. All the virgins slumbered and slept; but the wise only revived again to go forth afresh to meet the Bridegroom. The foolish virgins, who at first set out with them, could not answer the awakening call, and in this it was *shown* that they were *foolish* virgins, though it did not appear in the beginning; but from first to last it was so. The foolish virgins *never had oil in their*

"After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight" (Hos. vi. 2). It was on the *third day* that Christ rose from the dead, for it was not possible that He could be holden of death.

* *The seventh day* is used to mark a fulness of time. "God did rest the seventh day from all his works."

vessels; the effect of this did not show itself in the beginning, but soon it became very manifest. The righteous call from the Lord in the day of declension, will prove the true condition of many to whom that call is made.

In all this, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal: the Lord knoweth them that are his; and let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

"PUT YE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST."

BLESSED to be putting on by faith that one obedience of my Head, which is without seam or spot. Yes—putting on by faith, do I say? Legal as may be the sound in the ears of some, faith is not a dead or dormant grace, but is given for act and exercise, or wherefore these exhortations, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. xiii. 14); "Put on bowels of mercies," &c. (Col. iii. 12); "Put off the old man—put on the new" (Eph. iv. 22, 24); "Put on the whole armour of God" (Eph. vi. 11); "Giving all diligence, *add* to your faith," &c. (2 Peter i. 5); with others innumerable—all most desirable to trace out and receive in the full force as the soul is healthy, but avoided and neglected as it sinks into spiritual sloth and sickness.

Objection: But faith of itself can do nothing. Answer: Nor does it want it; it is content to act in Christ; live on Christ; be filled with Christ; and triumphantly exclaims, "I can do all things through Christ," &c. (Phil. iv. 13); and thus, as the living soul finds the exhortations, and *they find it*, every one serves as a fresh errand to Christ, and laying them at his dear feet it reminds Him of his own words, "Without me ye can do nothing" (John xv. 5);

and says, "Lord, I cannot do it, do it for me, fulfil it in me, and thine shall be the glory. I am exhorted to put thee on; oh clothe me with thyself, and in thee may I walk before men. Thy light is so shining through me, that poor little insignificant *I* may be hidden, obscured, and lost, and all the fruit be brought forth to God and not to myself. I resting by faith in thy fulfilment and obedience, and thus becoming dead to the law and alive to and in thee."

This is faith's *activity*, even to rest in and lean on Christ. This faith's *diligence*, to enter into and be satisfied with the doing of another. This faith's *triumph*, to be victorious in a conquest already achieved, and to rejoice over enemies who have already received their death-blow from the hand of its Captain. This keeps the soul humble and dependent, glorifying that it has all in Christ, but feeling that it has nothing in self. Faith, however, is not hereby discouraged; it learns how to be abased in self, and to abound in Christ; to be empty in self, full in Christ; poor in self, rich in Christ; weak in self, strong in Christ; and thus is self put off and Christ put on, and our (spiritual) senses are exercised to discern good and evil, we growing into spiritual strength and maturity in Christ; not needing milk as babes, but eating the strong and savoury meat, and walking in the way of our Father's commandments with an enlarged heart. Wherefore, oh! wherefore are we in this day such a baby race? Wherefore is there so little triumph of faith? rejoicing in Christ, and abounding in hope? Some would answer: "It is God's purpose it should be so." If it be, that altereth not the sinful part we take in procuring it. Let us not impiously think to shelter our guiltiness under God's decree. What He ordains shall surely come to pass, but the doers of evil are still amenable to his authority, and justly open to his righteous judgment and visitation, however He may over-

rule the wrong to accomplish his purpose or promote his glory. The wicked He will punish as a judge; the righteous chastise as a father. So the Scripture teaches, or why are the churches there reprov'd for their low estate, and for the particular delusions into which they had fallen, as in Rev. ii. 4, "I have somewhat to say," &c. Heb. v. 12, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers," &c. Gal. iii. 6, "I marvel," &c. Gal. iv. 9, 10, "I am afraid," &c. 1 Cor. iii. 2, 4, "I have fed," &c., in all which places the description of the state is in the language of reproof, although those states were certainly as much foreknown of God, as our present one, and He would thereby as much bring to pass his own designs.

It is evident, then, that God's decree excuseth not, either our sin, or the carnality or unhealthiness of our souls, or our little spirituality and great worldly-mindedness; and I do humbly believe from my soul that our present pining and sickly condition arises from the rejection of and dishonour done to the CHRIST of God, for "he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him" (John v. 23), and we are now going about to establish our own righteousness, and are not, *indeed we are not*, submitting ourselves to the righteousness of God; and therefore we attain not what we seek, *peace of conscience*, because we seek it not by faith in what Christ has done, but by striving to do ourselves, which (striving not being lawful) is not crowned, but God does frustrate it; and we, looking for much, bring in little, and desiring peace, find disappointment, and then complain and murmur, and would say if we dare, "The Lord's ways are not equal." But it is our ways, O house of Israel, which are not equal, and it is the inequality of those ways which distresses. Oh, then, come and let us go up to the house of the Lord, that we may walk in his ways, which are equity and strict judgment, meeting in and falling upon

Christ. And as we see by faith that He has borne our judgment, we fear not the sword of justice, for in Him it hath found *fulness* of satisfaction. And as we see that He is our equity, we fear not the eye of justice, for in Him that too hath been satisfied, yea, "well pleased." Oh that I had a voice like a trumpet, to sound in the Spirit's power to all the earth what is in Jesus, and to exhort all drooping saints to be seeking faith in Christ, instead of bitterness in self, or delight in creatures; and to be resting satisfied with his obedience and walking in it, instead of labouring in the vain work of trying to procure one of our own. Oh, thou Bridegroom of our souls, how art Thou dishonoured by the wanderings of thy betrothed one. Do make us chaste to Thee, and contented to be all fair in Thee alone; then will our lives honour, and our lips praise Thee.

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THE WARS OF THE LORD.

“**H**E wars of the Lord” (Numb. xxi. 14) are of two kinds; those which He conducted entirely alone, and those in which He employed his people.

The battle at the Red Sea was of the first kind. The Lord was there all alone. Israel had nothing to do but to be still and see God's salvation. He looked forth from the cloudy pillar and troubled the host of Egypt. So in the controversy with Balaam. The Lord was again all alone, apart from Israel who did not know at the time what was going on, in the distant and high places of

Moab. The deliverance of Samaria in the time of Elisha (2 Kings vii.), and the destruction of Sennacherib's host (2 Kings xix.), are of the same character.

The battles with Amalek (Ex. xvii.), with Arad the Canaanite, Sihon the Amorite, and Og King of Bashan (Numb. xxi.) are of the second kind. The Lord employed his people in them. So, after they enter the land, the battles of Gideon, Jonathan, David, that at Jericho, and that at Ai, are generally of this class. In the one case Jehovah triumphed *for* Israel, in the other *in* Israel.

Each of these kinds of battle has its own proper moral or spiritual sense. Thus the great act of redemption, like the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, was entirely single-handed as we know. The Lord drank the cup alone and to the dregs,—

"His be the Victor's name,
Who fought the fight alone."

But there is a class of battles, for the fighting of which we must enter the field ourselves. Our business is to fight, and nothing is done without us. Spiritual conflicts the believer goes through in his own person. In them he is deeply conscious of the fight. He may know that he has no strength equal to the occasion, but he knows that he must be in the field from first to last.

The Lord, it is true, brings the strength, but it is used in and through his saints. The in-dwelling Spirit meets the in-dwelling sin—or the new man in Christ mortifies the earthly members.—*Short Meditations on the Psalms.*

ON OBJECTIONS TO IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS.

THE following objections to the doctrine of imputed righteousness, along with answers to the same, are taken from the notes to Bishop O'Brien's sermons on Faith (second edition), a work which cannot be too highly

commended, for its able advocacy of clear and scriptural views on this all-important subject. It may be well to state, that while the Bishop carefully abstains from any division of the work of Christ into parts, attributing to one a certain value, and to another, another,—as they do who make the life justify while the death atones; yet, on the other hand, he clearly points out the error of those who regard the pardon of sin as all that is meant by the imputation of righteousness. He considers the work of Christ in the flesh, *taken as a whole*, to be the “proper meritorious source” to the believer, both of the pardon of his offences and of the imputation of righteousness to him. To quote his own words:—

“The express testimony of Scripture, then, concerning the nature of God’s justification of sinners is, that besides what is naturally conveyed by *the pardon of their iniquities, the covering of their sins*, it includes also *the imputation of righteousness* unto them; that to those whom he justifies, *He does not impute sin*, and that *He does impute righteousness to them*.”

The zeal of some in the present day in oppugning incautious statements concerning the doctrine of imputed righteousness, may (if it has not already done so) carry them too far on the other side, and lead many to treat the imputation of righteousness as if it were not to be distinguished from the pardon of sin; and as if the obedience of Christ, “by which many shall be made righteous,” consisted only in dying on the cross, and not (as Scripture represents) becoming “obedient unto ($\mu\epsilon\chi\rho\iota$ until, *i.e.*, up to and including) death” (Phil. ii. 8). Where such defective views of imputed righteousness are held, it may not be amiss to show the hollow nature of the objections sometimes urged against the fuller view of truth, which takes the life no less than the death of Christ as an essential part of his finished work.

The first objection is, that

“While the law only requires us to obey *or* to suffer, this doctrine seems to require us to obey *and* to suffer, because according to it, Christ, as our representative, obeyed *and* suffered for us.”

The Bishop, as might be expected from one who is no mean master of logic, first detects the fallacy lurking in this argument, and thus having exposed its failure, he sets forth the true state of the case.

"But there is an ambiguity in the word *requires*, which renders it necessary to fix its meaning, before we can judge what this argument is worth. To make it of any value, *requires* ought to mean *requires for our justification*. This is its sense in the second proposition; but the same sense cannot be given to the word in the first proposition without making it false. The law does not propose *suffering* as a substitute for *obedience* in procuring *justification*, but sets it forth as the penal consequence of disobedience. If the law says, Obey or suffer, it is not as proposing two means to the same end, either of which you may take with the same result. It is an alternative of a different kind, one in which if you do not choose the first you must take the second; and the law does not represent those who take the second, and suffer accordingly, as objects of God's favour and justified by Him, but as condemned by Him, and objects of his wrath. It cannot be said, therefore, that we have suffered in Christ, and are therefore justified before God. No other way of justification but obedience is proposed to us. Reasoning, therefore, on these principles, the conclusion would seem to be that we cannot regard ourselves as justified before God, until we can say that we have obeyed in Christ."

The next objection is one not unfrequently urged in the controversy now being carried on amongst many Christians on the subject of the righteousness of God. Mr. Darby brandishes it triumphantly in his contest with the *Record*, in a pamphlet on this subject. His words are, "Those who are of works of law are under a curse. How so, if it is fulfilled? The curse has no ground, if the law has been vicariously fulfilled." Or, again, where (it must be admitted) he has the advantage by reason of an unwary expression of those he is opposing. "Indeed, it is a strange system which first keeps the law perfectly, in every respect surely, so that we are justified, perfectly righteous before God, and then dies for us."

If the *Record* had stated that by Christ keeping the law for us, we are justified, this thrust of their opponent could not be easily parried, and this is just the weak point of those who, having divided the work of Christ into two

parts, speak as if one part did that which really is only obtained by the two conjoined. However, the first statement of the objection as we have quoted it in the words of Mr. Darby, will not stand the keen logic of the Bishop, as will appear by what follows. Let the objection, however, be first stated in the Bishop's own words.

"If we had ourselves obeyed, could we have been justly punished: And if He has obeyed for us, can it be justly required that he should suffer for us also?"

Answer.—"This reasoning appears plausible, but it is really founded upon an inadequate statement of the case. For Christ's obedience has been rendered for man, not simply as subject to the law, but as a sinner against the law. No obedience rendered *by* such a one, and, therefore, no obedience rendered *for* him, could expiate his past guilt, or could secure his justification, while his guilt was unexpiated. And for this the other part of the Lord's work was necessary."

It would be well if the result of the present controversy should be to keep those who write on the subject of justification from making distinctions and divisions where Scripture has made none: but it would be deplorable indeed if the foundation of a believer's faith were shaken to gratify the inordinate delight which some have in attacking everything which other Christians value. The destructive element in character never shows itself in a more dangerous form than when it lays itself out to overturn the foundations on which the faith of simple-minded Spirit-taught Christians has, for ages, rested. A combative spirit may rejoice in detecting flaws in unwary statements of truth, but he is a safer guide, as well as a wiser man, who, while keeping close to Scripture expressions, will not reject Scripture truth because clothed in faulty or defective language. If he is counted a mad-man who throws away a precious gem because he detects flaws in its setting, how much more is he, who casts away precious truth, because it is unwisely or inaccurately stated.

"HE MADE KNOWN HIS WAYS UNTO MOSES."

PSALM CIII. 7.

IN important principle is involved in this simple utterance of the sweet Psalmist, to which (as it admits of manifold illustration) the attention of the reader is earnestly invited.

The native dignity of the opening verses of our Bible affords the earliest illustration of the signal favour granted to Israel's lawgiver. Moses alone, of all existing men, was commissioned to record (in order to "make known" to future generations) that "in the beginning *God* created the heavens and the earth." The isolated grandeur of his opening utterance of Scripture is so familiar to us, and the *inditer* of it is so entirely kept out of view, that it is not improbable that the circumstance of its being "made known" to the writer, in the way of a *revealed* commission, may not have occurred to those who, from the days of childhood, have been accustomed to listen to it. That the privileges of the prophet extended far beyond the circumstance of his being the instrument selected by the Lord to transmit to future ages an authentic account of the creation and of Jehovah's dealings with our earliest progenitors, his subsequent history will sufficiently unfold.

From the narrative in Acts vii. it is clear that a divine communication must have been made to Moses prior to his presenting himself as a deliverer before God's ancient people, otherwise he could not have "supposed his brethren would have understood how that God, by his hand, would deliver them." It is not the manner of the Most High to "hide from" his children that which He is about to do. We need not be surprised, therefore, that Moses was informed of his exact destiny, at least forty years before

he was called to exercise its functions. "*When forty years were expired,*" we read of the Lord revealing himself to him by a name which bespoke *the eternity, and unchanging nature* of Him who thus "*made himself known*"—the name Jehovah. It is worthy of note that the Most High, in each successive commission with which He entrusts his servant connects his name with that by which He had been previously known to his people. To "the children of Israel," "the elders of Israel," and "unto the king of Egypt," in succession, is the embassy conveyed in the name of "*Jehovah, God of their fathers,*" and "*Jehovah, God of the Hebrews,*" respectively. *Unchanging* is Jehovah; *eternally in covenant* with the one, and not less *unbending*, in his judicial aspect, toward the other! Such was the revelation made by Him, who, when *first* He appeared to Moses, spoke of himself merely as "the *God of Abraham,*" &c. The future leader of Israel "*hid his face,*" we are told, "*for he was afraid to look upon God;*" and then, in the peculiarly appropriate nomenclature of Scripture, we read: "*And Jehovah (the Lord) said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey,*" &c. (Exod. iii. 7—12). A *sevenfold* declaration is here made by the most High (significant of the *perfection* of his ways) as to his watchfulness over, and purposed deliverance of, his favoured people. Thus is Moses, at *Mount Horeb*, in the peninsula of Sinai, made the depositary of the divine purpose of the deliverance and blessing of Israel, while the people were still in *Egypt*, groaning beneath "the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppressed them." Thus does the Lord "*make known his ways unto Moses,*" on this occasion

again, before He visibly interposes on behalf of his people, before "*His acts* are made known to the children of Israel."

No fewer than *three* times (as it is recorded in the commencement of the sixth chapter) does the Lord reveal Himself to Moses, and the children of Israel respectively, by the encouraging title, "Jehovah." He himself comments on the distinguishing privilege thus vouchsafed to the leader of his people, in the words which follow, "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, *but by my name Jehovah, was I not known to them.*" After recurring to the covenant established with their fathers, and to his having "heard the groaning of the children of Israel in Egypt," Moses is commanded to convey to the Israelites, by a *sevenfold* assurance, the divine purposes of deliverance and blessing with respect to them (verses 6—8). We have, in the twenty-fifth chapter, a very remarkable declaration, made to Moses, in his character of mediator; remarkable, because in fact (owing to the sin of Israel) never carried into effect. The passage occurs in connexion with the injunctions respecting the construction of the Ark; it is as follows (v. 22): "And there I will meet with *thee*, and I will commune with *thee* from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims, which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." This position of privilege, conditionally destined for the Mediator, is forfeited, as has been already observed, through the sin of the people. The subsequent history (chap. xxxiii.) exhibits a marked change in the relation of this "stiff-necked race" towards Him who had entered into covenant with them, a change which finds its expression in the course adopted by Moses, as related in the seventh verse, "And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it *without the camp*, and called it *the tabernacle of the congregation*; and it came to pass that every one which

sought the Lord *went out* unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was *without the camp*." It is interesting to observe, in connexion with the foregoing remarks, the interchange of assertion which repeatedly takes place between the Lord and his servant, with regard to the bringing up of Israel out of Egypt. At the seventh verse of chapter xxxii., we hear the Lord saying, "Go, get thee down, for *thy* people, which *thou* broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves." Moses, for his part, replies, "Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against *thy* people, which *thou* hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power and with a mighty hand?"

The thirty-third and thirty-fourth of Exodus unfold a further view of the communications of Jehovah with this his highly-favoured servant, a view wherein "the Lord" is seen speaking unto Moses, face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. In answer to the intercession of Moses, we have there, for the third time, a sevenfold declaration of the divine purpose, a declaration teeming with grace at every stage of it. According to the Apostle John's interpretation of the sixth of Isaiah (chapter xii. 41), we are at liberty to apply the title "Jehovah" (the Lord) to the Lord Jesus, wherever we meet with it in the Old Testament. This feature of the divine ways cannot fail to give an accelerated interest to the passage, wherein the Lord's relation to his people is unfolded to Moses in a twofold aspect (chapter xxxiv. 6, 7), "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin.*"

Thus far have we seen the Lord, in perfect yet superabundant number, exhibiting his attributes of *grace*. The passages which follow exhibit Him in his judicial aspect, "And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting

the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and fourth generation." A practical comment upon this latter aspect of Jehovah is afforded by the communication He grants to Moses (in answer to his intercession), as recorded at the ninth verse. We there find the Lord communicating to his servant his purposes of *judgment* on the Canaanitish nations, purposes to be carried into effect by the instrumentality of the people of Israel.

In looking back on these gracious and repeated communications of the Most High with the chosen leader of his people, we may surely apply the words of his concluding song, to himself, and say, "Jehovah found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."

"He made known his ways unto Moses,
His acts unto the children of Israel."

D. E.

THE CROSS.

THEY that look only to the merit of the cross, and overlook the objective use of it to the soul, do deceive themselves, and deprive themselves of the full efficacy of it; and deal like a foolish patient, that thinketh to be cured by commending the medicine, or by believing that it hath virtue to cure his disease, when, in the mean time, he lets it lie by him in the box, and never taketh it, or applyeth it to himself.—*Baxter*.

THE CHURCH.

THE word for *Church* (*ecclesia*) as all know, was the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessed of the rights of citizenship for the transaction of public affairs. That they were *summoned* is expressed in the latter part of the word; that they were summoned *out of* the whole population, a large, but, at the same time, a select portion of it, including neither the populace, nor strangers, nor yet those who had forfeited their civic rights, this is expressed in the first. Both the *calling* and the *calling out* are moments to be remembered, when the word is assumed into a higher Christian sense, for in them the chief part of its peculiar adaptation to its angustier uses lies.—*Dean Trench's "Synonyms of the New Testament."*

THE ROCK OF AGES.—ISA. xxvi. 4.

"Let the inhabitants of the Rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains."—*Isa. xlii. 11.*

ON the Rock in rapture dwelling,
Shout ye saints the song of grace,
Hymns and hallelujahs swelling,
Glory in your Resting-place.

Sing to Christ, the Rock of Ages,
Songs of everlasting praise,
For Jehovah's oath engages,
On this Rock, his church to raise.

Rock of Ages, deeply founded,
Stable as the throne of God,
For transgression cleft and wounded,
Cleft for water and for blood.

Resting on this sure foundation,
Other refuge cast away;
God provides you no salvation,
Save what He in Zion lay.

First-begotten, Corner-stone,
Chosen, precious, tried and chief;
On this Rock build thou alone,
Stumble not through unbelief!

Firmly cling to this foundation,
Build not stubble, hay, or dross,
God endorses Christ's salvation,
Build on him or suffer loss.

Spurn the quicksands which surround you,
Decked in moral speciousness,
Hell's devices to confound you,
Mocking Jesu's righteousness.

Other gospels, self-caressing,
Fertile fancies of the brain,
Christless schemes without his blessing,
Healing slightly sinners' pain.

What from conscience-guilt can ease us
But a true and living faith
In the precious blood of Jesus,
And his full atoning death?

Cling to Christ, the Rock of Ages,
Though the fiercest foes assail,
Not the malice Satan wages,
Nor the gates of hell prevail.

Not the waves vehement beating,
Not the wildest winds that roar,
Nor their double fury meeting,
Moves the Rock, for evermore!

Sing again the matchless story!
Join the choral song of grace,
Kings, and priests, and heirs of glory,
Bless Jehovah's Resting-place.

On this Rock, securely dwelling,
Saints below, and saints above,
One with Him, in rapture telling
All the triumphs of his love.

REPENTANCE.

THE Greek word (*metanoia*), translated *repentance* in our English New Testament, signifies an *after-mind*, a *change of mind*. Inasmuch, however, as the phrase *to change one's mind* has a conventional and limited sense, often implying merely a change of opinion, of purpose, or plan, it is very necessary that we do not confine the change of mind which the New Testament enforces, and which God lays as a command upon "all men everywhere," by our idiomatic usage of the term.

The extent and quality of a change of mind must depend upon the circumstances in which that change takes place. A belle who is dressing for a party, and who, having first decorated her hair with jewels, has afterwards, from some consideration, substituted a wreath of flowers, has *changed her mind*. But this *metanoia*—the *change of mind* in a case like this—is very different from that which takes place in the condemned murderer, when, in the solitude of his cell, reflecting upon his crime, he becomes conscious of his enormous wickedness and of its fearful penalty.

A change of mind in this latter case has elements in it which are absent from the former. There is a sense of impending punishment, a sorrow for the wrong done to the victim of his anger, an acquiescence in the sentence under which he lies. We should not apply the word *repentance* to the change of mind in the former case, but for the latter we know no other word. To say that that man had *changed his mind*, would, to an English ear at least, sound frivolous. And yet, if by the term *change of mind* we understood all that that phrase really contains, it would express the entire truth.*

* It is not, of course, intended that the feeling described as possessing

No great study of words is necessary to convince us that in some cases common usage increases, in others diminishes, the radical power of a word. The question of an amended translation of the Bible has been much discussed, and we all feel that the more truthful rendering of a word is a boon of which we cannot estimate the magnitude. But if a translator of Matt. xi. 21 told us that "Tyre and Sidon would long ago have *changed their mind* in sackcloth and ashes," we doubt if many would prefer his reading.

It may help us in defining the change of mind which God requires in "all men everywhere," if we consider the relations existing between man and God. God made man perfect, and he believed and trusted his kind Creator. But the tempter belied God, and the man believed the tempter. A *metanoia*, a change of mind, was thus produced, and man fell. God, in his wisdom, did not destroy sin in the bud, but suffered it to develop its baneful fruit.

From Adam to Moses death reigned because of sin. Then God divided men, and placed the people of Israel under circumstances of special favour, established a covenant between Himself and them, and promised them all blessing on condition of their obedience: "This do and thou shalt live." The failure of Israel was the failure of the race. The husbandman had taken a choice slip of the vine of the earth; had planted it in a very fruitful hill; had fenced it round and gathered out the stones thereof. He looked that it should bear grapes, but it brought forth wild grapes (*literally*, poisonous berries, see Isa. v.).

Men would call it a waste of time in a husbandman, who, having made such a trial of any plant with such results, should repeat his experiment. God is the great Husbandman, and He does nothing superfluously.

While the Jews, under the law, were hardening their the mind of the criminal is a definition of New Testament repentance. It is but an illustration of one phase of the subject.

hearts, and thus preparing themselves for blaspheming the Holy Ghost and murdering the Son of God, the Gentiles without law, professing themselves wise became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Iniquity had come to the full: it was manifest that man under law, and man without law, was an utterly corrupt and evil creature.

John the Baptist came and laid the axe to the root of the tree. No more parleying with man, no more concession to the hardness of his heart (see Matt. xix. 8), no more trying whether, under any possible circumstances, man could be reclaimed. John's testimony was, that every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. But the law, by making the offence abound, had given overwhelming evidence that every human tree was utterly and hopelessly evil. Of old time God had said, "The *vineyard* of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his *pleasant plant*," but briers and thorns have come up over it, and "in the *wilderness* of Judea" John preaches, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

John preached the baptism of *repentance*, and the angel Gabriel expounded the term when, quoting Malachi, he said to Zacharias, "He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to *turn the hearts* of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just." The cry, "Repent ye," was repeated by the Lord who came "not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance," and was echoed by the apostles, who preached, "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

But if the preacher now bids men repent, does he not tell them to *do* something before coming to Christ, and so interpose an impassable barrier between them and Him?

We reply, that the command to a man to *be* anything

other than he is, is as impracticable as to bid him *do* anything. And therefore the rule which forbids the preaching of repentance, rejects also the word of reconciliation which God hath committed unto us, and forbids us, as ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us, to pray in Christ's stead, "*Be ye reconciled to God.*"

But if this is ground which no true man would take, then we say that this word of reconciliation is but *repentance* differently expressed. Change of mind toward God—repentance toward God—"to turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just." "Repent" is a command, and "Be ye reconciled" is an entreaty. But to the longing soul the command is a loving invitation, and to the soul full of earth, and self, and sin, the kind entreaty is a hard command. Men hear the voice from heaven according to the condition of their hearts; some say, "It thundered;" others, that, "An angel spake" (John xii.).

But to require *faith* as a condition of salvation is to interpose a barrier just as impassable as to demand *repentance*, for faith is as far beyond the reach of man as repentance; both are alike the gifts of God. And this leads us back to that precious passage in 2 Cor. v., "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation: to wit, that *God was in Christ* reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." "*God was in Christ*," there was the efficacy of the cross. *Christ is in the word*, there is the power of the preaching; and whether the word be "Repent," to an unawakened sinner, or "Believe," to an inquiring and repentant sinner, Christ is in the word spoken.

We preach Christ—Christ crucified, Christ risen—and He who bid the man stretch forth his withered hand, and said to the widow's son and to the ruler's daughter, "I

say unto thee, Arise;" and to Lazarus, "Come forth!" will surely stand by his own ambassadors, whether, fastening their eyes upon a lifelong cripple, they bid him in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk; or in the same name command all men everywhere to repent; or, in Christ's stead, beseech them to be reconciled to God.

Did Jesus mock the sleeping bodies which He raised to life; or Peter and John torture with impossible commands the lame man lying at the Beautiful gate of the house of prayer? Nay, verily. And by how much the undying soul is more precious than the poor clay tabernacle she shall so soon put off, by so much greater is the certainty that the only wise God our Saviour will never say to men, "Repent," "Believe," "Be reconciled," without giving, with the command, to every willing soul, the power to obey.

So far as the Father and Christ are concerned, neither faith nor repentance comes in question. The Father was pleased and satisfied with his Son's work; but when the sinner's acceptance comes in question, then both repentance and faith are needed. The work of Christ is irrespective of us—of our feeling faith, repentance, &c. It is a sweet savour of God, whether we will have it or not; but the moment we come to appropriate this, then repentance, and faith, &c., are brought into question.

The object of the preacher should be to lead the sinner to repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. This is not wrought by crying "Repent," or "Believe," apart from the exhibition of the fallen condition of man, on the one hand, and the redemption work of Christ, on the other. Before a man repents, he must be convinced of sin; before he believes on Jesus, he must know what He has done. The preaching of Christ crucified effects all this. The lifting up of Jesus to sinner

as their Saviour, means nothing, unless it mean, "Repent, and believe the gospel." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." M.

THE PREROGATIVE OF MERCY.

THE following conversation between two peers in the House of Lords, on Monday, August 4, as reported in the papers, may be suggestive of some useful lessons on a deeper subject than that which occupied their lordships' attention:—

VISCOUNT DUNGANNON called attention to the case of William Herdman, convicted at the County Antrim assizes at Belfast of the murder of his cousin, and recommended by the jury to mercy on the alleged ground of insanity, and asked what ground the Government would adopt.

The Duke of NEWCASTLE replied, that the course taken by the noble Viscount was extremely irregular, and *if there was one thing more than another with which it was irregular to interfere, it was in the prerogative of mercy.*

And yet how many there are who think and talk in a manner just as irregular, in reference to the exercise of the prerogative of mercy by Him "to whom belongeth mercy." They forget that, though fallen man may have a claim upon God's justice, he has none upon his mercy.

How much has been spoken and written in a cavilling tone against God's sovereignty, when dealing with those who justly deserve his wrath—in sparing some and leaving others to their just desert.

But must it not appear, in God's sight, unwarrantable interference, for man to presume to dictate to Him as to how He *ought* to show mercy. The Government (in the case alluded to) resent the attempted interference with

the prerogative of the crown, even when coming from one of high rank, and who is not himself in the hands of justice. But sinners, rebels against God, under the condemnation of his law, awaiting the execution of their justly deserved sentence, can be found to arraign the justice of God's dealings in "having mercy upon whom He will have mercy," and, forgetful of their own position as in the hands of justice, claim mercy as if it were man's due, instead of being a wholly undeserved and unmerited exercise of sovereign grace.

It is, however, one thing to claim mercy as man's due, another to seek it as the gift of God's grace; those who seek it in this way shall surely find it. "He is rich in mercy unto all them that call upon him."

No anxious soul, seeking for mercy through God's appointed channel—Christ, need ever fear the doctrine of election; on the contrary, it is a cordial in the day of despondency; a fountain of consolation when all creature comforts fail.


He that said, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out," said with the same breath, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," and it is not saying too much to assert that the last quoted words afford a more firm and abiding stay for the seeking soul than even the former, for from them we gather that our coming to Christ is no mere fitful whim of the creature; no work of human effort, which may be undone the next moment; but the feeblest faith is the result of sovereign grace and eternal purpose, and hence

"What for itself love first began,
That love and truth shall end in man."

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John xv. 16).

H. E. B.

ORIGINAL SIN.

T. Paul treats of this subject in Romans v. From verse 12—30 he shows the federal character of the first Adam as the *law-breaker*, and of the second Adam as the *law-fulfiller*.

The first covenant of life was made with Adam and his posterity, on the condition of his obedience to the first law, as the representative of man.

He broke the covenant, and dying, according to the word of the Lawgiver, he gave birth to a dying seed.

Every offspring of the fallen parents came into the world as legally dead before God; dead under the penalty of an already broken law.

It did not need that each child of Adam should personally put forth his hand to the tree of knowledge, and eat thereof, to sow within him the seeds of death; he was already dead.

The offspring was already dead before God; dead morally, dead legally, dead physically.

These arguments of Paul in Romans v. show the doctrine of original sin. They show that the first transgression was a federal act, and that in the perpetuity of its effect it reaches unto us who have proceeded from Adam. We came not into this world to stand our trial as he did. The creature man has failed; all are concluded under sin. Could we keep the law from our birth upward, we should still be unpurged from the imputation of Adam's sin. Our condition is hopeless as it regards ourselves.

Not only are we under federal condemnation, but we inherit Adam's fallen nature, so that from the time of our birth we are corrupt and go astray.

Though guilty *legally*, each individual sinner perishes

by *his own iniquity*. We are each of us by our own acts of rebellion consenting to our first parents' guilt, completing the fulness of this world's iniquity. So shall we be speechless in the day of account.

But this truth is the great parallel of the glorious federal headship of the second Adam.—*The Protoplast*.

WHAT IS IT TO BELIEVE?

IF you ask almost any one in this land the question, whether he or she believes, the answer usually is, "Of course I do; I never disbelieved."

But belief, according to the Scripture view, is a very different thing from an assent of the understanding to historic facts or doctrinal truths.

Belief is an assent and consent to the great truth of atonement by blood; of substitution on the part of Christ for the sinner.

Saving belief is the trusting in God's certain and un-failing promise; taking his remedy, however it may appear inadequate to my want and need.

Saving belief is so apprehending Christ as the object of God's satisfaction; the object of the sinner's thoughts, hope and affection, that I take my part with Christ in desire and pursuit, against sin, iniquity, and transgression; seeing sin as God sees it—hating it as He hates it; resolving rather to perish than to sin, because sin is repugnant in nature and character, wholly and altogether, to the new creature which is born of God, to one who is a partaker of the divine nature.

This saving belief, though it embraces the understanding and mind, including the affections and feelings, is wrought by the Divine Spirit upon the soul.

The Holy Spirit convinces of sin, and reveals Christ. He shows Christ in his character as Saviour, Sin-bearer, Atoner, and Peacemaker; and thus accepting Him as the Daysman, the One in whom God is well pleased, the believing sinner is at peace, because by God's authoritative word he is justified.

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—IX.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."—John iii. 1—6.

WE may linger for a moment on the threshold of the first chamber of that great temple of truth opened to us in our Lord's discourses, to glance at its proportions, and its relations to the rest of the glorious structure. This conversation with Nicodemus, recorded first in order, is fittingly so recorded, for it is primary and fundamental in its character. It deals closely with personal obligations, and these of a nature essential and indispensable. Then it is as comprehensive as it is fundamental. It sweeps over the entire plan of redemption, from its consummation in the new life of men to its source in the everlasting love of God. Regeneration by the Spirit, the mediation of the Son, the eternal

grace of the Father, are all unfolded here. We have the issue, the channel, the fountain of salvation before us; or, to vary the image, its fruit, its stem, its root. In another sense also this discourse is wondrously comprehensive, and, so to say, tree-like; for from the starting point of the individual case, and its imperative necessities, it branches out into a glorious statement of God's pity for the fallen race, and the welcome of mercy to the wide world.

The occasion of the discourse was singular—a nocturnal interview between the Saviour and one of the Sanhedrim, a theologian of high repute in Jerusalem. Among the many whose minds were impressed and convinced by the miracles wrought by the Saviour during the paschal solemnity, was one whom we should expect to find there first or last of all, according to the view we take of his position. Judge him by his privileges and profession, a master in Israel, and who should, sooner than he, recognize the claims of a messenger from God? Judge him by the pride and professionalism of his class, the rulers of the pharisaic sect, and whom can you less hope to see acknowledge the mission of a new and strange teacher? Anticipation formed simply from either of these points of view, would have failed to forecast the conduct of Nicodemus. He recognizes the claims of Christ, but not openly; he is an exception among the men of his rank, but not bold and decided. In our judgment of his character, we must not set him very high or very low. There is something to commend in his conduct, something to condemn. He is convinced of the divine mission of the Saviour—thus far well; he comes to Jesus expressing his conviction; he argues most conclusively from Christ's works to his prophetic authority, and puts himself in the attitude of an enquirer—all to be approved. But he comes stealthily, by night, through fear of others; and he has not

yet opened his heart, trustingly, to the true claims of Jesus. He does not say with Nathanael, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God," but only, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God." He will not go beyond the expression of a conviction common to numbers, "*we* know." He but repeats the creed of the many, not to be trusted, who are spoken of in the previous chapter. Yet, on the whole, for us who know the weakness of poor human nature, a commending judgment in this case will be most befitting—the more that we know the faith of Nicodemus did not go back, but struggled into a fuller and more open discipleship. Let us dwell on what is to be approved, rather than on what is worthy of censure, and give our tribute to the earnestness which brought a great doctor to become an enquirer, though secretly and stumblingly, at the feet of Jesus of Nazareth.

We have called Nicodemus an enquirer; rightly, as is evident, although the evangelist records no question as actually proposed. Question was implied in the very visit, and in the confession of Christ as a teacher; question to this effect, What new high truths hast thou, O Rabbi, to unfold to us? Perhaps such question was even expressed, though not recorded. We incline, however, to believe that our Lord anticipated enquiry, and interrupted the speaker. The evangelist giving us in Nicodemus an example of the as yet non-trustworthy believers, shows us also how Jesus knew their hearts.

Before the visitor, therefore, shapes his errand in words, the Master, discerning his spirit, perceiving that he is looking too far in advance, is desiring revelations of truth to be built upon his own great previous knowledge, is hoping to sweep into the kingdom of heaven, if this teacher can supply the key, with all the grandeur of his present high attainments, checks inquiry with a word that seems to say, You must commence by unlearning; you must go back to the

beginning, and acquire first principles. To illustrate great things by little, and imperfectly, it is as if a teacher, receiving a pupil of forward scholarship, from the care of another, should find it needful to remand him to the study of elements. The scholar brought his books with him, and hoped to be set to construe some new and more difficult authors; the master says, "We must go back to the rudiments, and lay a new foundation." Nicodemus, sharing with others grand notions of the coming reign of Messiah, hopes to hear of the mode in which the world is to be revolutionized and renewed, and the blessed instructor leads him into the truth regarding the renovation of his own heart. Great lesson this of Christianity—make the world better by bettering men, one by one. Reform society, by regeneration, soul by soul. Whatever notions, further, Nicodemus formed of the kingdom of heaven, he would naturally expect to stand high in it. How startling, therefore, must have been the announcement, made in the third person, but justly felt by the hearer as meant to have application to himself:—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The emphatic formula, so common in our Lord's discourses, as related by John, which introduces the high saying here, denotes the certainty and importance of the truth taught. "Amen, amen;" what follows is sure: let every ear hear it. It is the saying of a teacher come from God, yea, of one more than a teacher; and it refers to the most momentous of all subjects. Every word in it is to be weighed. The kingdom or reign of heaven, the reign of God, as we have it elsewhere, externally viewed, is the church-state of the New Testament age, under the rule of the exalted Saviour; internally, it is his rule, with all its blessings, in the souls of men. We have the inner view here. To see this kingdom, is to enjoy it, to be a subject

of it, or to understand and apprehend it. In both senses, to see the kingdom another birth than that which ushers into the light of this world is indispensable. "He cannot see"—"he is not able to see"—there is an impossibility in the nature of the case that he should enjoy or apprehend the blessings of God's reign over man, without such other birth. In order to inheriting or even perceiving the privileges of the new kingdom, a man, any man, every man Jew as well as Gentile, must be born again. "Again," or "from above," says the marginal reading, and the word bears either rendering. Yet here it is undoubtedly 'again,' as Nicodemus himself shows he understood it. There is something more, however, than *again* in the term. Other words would express the idea of a second time, this does more. It is anew, from the beginning, *over again*, so to say. And what is this new birth? It is the commencement of a new soul-life. It is the infusion of a principle of other life than that which is natural to fallen man. The new-born soul, indeed, is not another soul; the babe born is not another being from that babe unborn; but the life of the soul, as of the child, is otherwise than before derived and sustained. New thoughts, new feelings, new tastes, new appetencies, new likings, new joys, all show the other, and higher, and only true life. Our Lord's own expansion and explanation of his saying, will instruct us further.

That Nicodemus applied the words of our Lord to himself is evident from his answer. He heard amazed and stumbled. He could well enough understand how for a Gentile to get into the family of God, a second birth was needed; but why should a Jew be born again? Gentile proselytes were, indeed, spoken of as new-born; and fitly, as Nicodemus would reason, for they were naturally aliens; but the Jew is in the family already, why should he be required to enter it afresh? It is in this way that we are

to explain the astonishment of the ruler's reply; not by attributing to him such gross and stupid misapprehension of our Lord's meaning, as to suppose that he spoke literally of a second bodily birth. Nicodemus, doubtless, understood the words of Christ to contain a figure; a figure, as we have seen, not unfamiliar to the Jewish mind; and he answers in the same figurative vein. There is a curious light revealing the self-application made by Nicodemus of our Lord's saying, thrown out here by his use of the word "old." Had he thought of other men, it would have been enough to say *man*; *adult*, without *aged*, would have sufficed; we should have read, "when he is grown," not "when he is old." But Nicodemus, the elder, we may conclude, was himself "stricken in years." Now, to his thoughts, an old Jew, such as himself, was old not only in the family of man, but in the family of God. "We have one Father, even God," said the Jews, contending with Christ. Being then already aged in the family, why should it be needful that he should be born into it. To be within the house, how should a man that is seated already by the hearth, need to go forth and come in by the door. For a Jew to be newborn into the kingdom, seems as incredible and absurd a supposition, as for an old man "to enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born." "How," therefore, said Nicodemus, "can such a thing be?"

Our Lord's answer is not so much to explain a misunderstood saying, as to re-assert one that was discredited. The truth is at the same time re-uttered in an expanded and expository form. The repetition is preceded by the same formula of emphasis. Mark this well, the master says again, for it is the sure word of God. "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The use of "enter," for "see," does not materially modify the meaning; if "see," is

enjoy, "enter" is stronger: it is "begin to enjoy." The very first thing necessary to true sonship in the family of God, is a change of heart; a change which is not "of bloods, but of God." As to the birth by water and by the Spirit, let it be observed that the two things are the expository equivalent of being born again; two ways of denoting and describing it, or two parts of it thus described. Two parts of it, we think; as repentance and faith are both included in conversion. To the meaning of the expressions, those annotators and interpreters have guided us best, who find the key of the exposition in the ministry of John, and especially in his words, "I baptize with water; but He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost."

The objection of Nicodemus was to the necessity of change for the Jew in order to his entering the kingdom of heaven. The answer might be, Why, then, was John sent to the Jews, preaching repentance, and administering a baptism for the remission of sins? That baptism proclaimed plainly that the Jew, as well as others, needed to be washed, in order to his becoming a subject of the reign of God. Our Lord's words assert the same truth. In these words, we think, there is unquestionable allusion to John's baptism. Not, however, that the birth by water is baptism, but that the words *birth by water*, and the act *baptism by water*, declare the same truth, the necessity for man, as such, of a change by which he is separated, washed, "purged from his old sins."

This is the first part of the "birth anew;" the negative view of the change; the being cleansed from sin. But there is also birth by the Spirit, spoken of by John under the notion of a baptism, and with the added symbol of fire, in which there is the actual beginning of a new life, as when the babe, new-born, first learns to live by breathing. This is the positive aspect of the great change—the true completion of it—the being turned to God, without which

the birth by water, as distinguished from this, would be as imperfect as John's ministry without pentecost and the gospel.

But though distinguishable in thought, these two things are not separated in fact. They make one great change, wrought by the Spirit of the Lord; effected by the application of the blood of sprinkling, through inwrought faith, and the inspiration into the soul of his own divine life; making "the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." Within the compass of the promises of the new covenant, we have both parts of the great change in the words of Ezekiel's prophecy, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you (birth by water). A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you" (birth by the Spirit).

The reader who can "deem with reverence" of the mysteries of bodily life, may follow the analogies between the first and second births, and note in the earthly nativity singular shadows of the heavenly. Or, he may go back to the birth of a world, and remark how, when this earth was to pass into a new stage, and become the abode of man, "the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters," from which it was to emerge to the light and air of heaven.

But the objection is still stirring in the Jewish ruler's heart, Does all this apply to the descendants of Abraham? Yes, even to the seed of Abraham, who, to be "children," must have something more than Abraham's blood. The Jew claimed to enter the kingdom of God by virtue of natural descent; but our Lord shows that this could give no place in a spiritual society. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." The child of the first earthly birth, can only inherit thereby a nature such as belongs to the earthly parentage—a fallen, corrupt nature; or, at best,

if the Jew still urges his peculiarity of relation, such nature admitted to a status of advantage amid "carnal (fleshly) ordinances," connected with a "worldly sanctuary." To enter a spiritual society, he must have a spiritual life; he must have a new nature, and this must be derived from a corresponding parentage. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The kingdom of heaven being within, a new life in men's souls, no position which comes by natural birth can secure admission to it. The prince, born in a palace, is still "flesh"; the Jew, born in the city of David, though a Hebrew of the Hebrews, is nothing more. Spiritual life is only from the Spirit. To have it, therefore, it behoved the Jew as truly as the Gentile—behoved him alike in the old times when the earthly tabernacle stood, and now when it was being removed—to have an inner and divine nativity, making him partaker of Abraham's faith as well as of Abraham's blood. Nicodemus, therefore, if he will advert aright to the grand distinction between "flesh" and "spirit"—fallen human nature and the restored divine—the first having its happiness in sense, sin, the creature; the second in God—need not wonder that it should be said to him, "Ye must be born again."

Ah! does some reader of these pages say, I see it now—this is doctrine for the Jew; he is taught that he must not trust in birth, and national distinction, and temple services—he must be born again; we pray such an one to ask, but why must the Jew? Simply because these peculiarities of his did not change his true condition from the state common to men. The doctrine is for him because it is for all. See how the Great Teacher puts it, "Except a man be born again." Man, as man descended from Adam, no matter through what intermediate lineage, must be changed and quickened by the Spirit in order to his becoming a child of God. O, my soul, art thou so quickened? Whatever thou wast, hast thou been "washed, sanctified,

justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of the Lord"? Hast thou an eye to see, a heart to relish the things of the kingdom, "righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost"? Dost thou, at least, as a new-born babe, desire the sincere milk of the word, that thou mayest grow thereby? Answer to thy conscience and thy God, for the inquiry outweighs all besides.

THE WATER OF SEPARATION.—IV.

MUCH practical instruction is given to us in the Scriptures from the history of Israel in the wilderness. Multiplied warnings are there given to us in the types of the things in which we ourselves now are. When the apostle applies this to us, he says, "Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three-and-twenty thousand."

In reference to this same transgression we get other warnings also. In what was written to the church at Pergamos, Christ says, "I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication" (Rev. ii. 14).

Reference is here made to this transgression, because in the day when Israel was led into communion with the righteousness of God in judgment because of this sin, they were then purified with the water of separation. We must have communion with God in the righteousness of his judgments, and in the riches of his grace; and in this the water of separation was used.

It was the sin of Saul to spare Agag when the Lord had said, "Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not;" for the Lord never forgot what Amalek had done to Israel; but in this Saul had no concern. And so it was with the Midianites also; Israel was so precious in the sight of the Lord, that He could not bear with those who plunged them into misery.

In the jealousy of his own love, he plagued the Israelites, but in his jealousy for Israel he cut off the Midianites; and in this He associates Israel in heart entirely with Himself. This was brought in near the close of the history of Moses, "And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites; afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people" (read Num. xxxi. as far as verse 24).

We must be very righteous against those that would turn us from God by the deceitful enticements of their own lusts; and a part of the experience in which we are taught of God, is to reckon them among our enemies; for if walking after the flesh, we should consider them as friends. He is our enemy, who would draw us away from God to himself; he may do it by his personal kindness, but enmity is in it; and God will lead us out to war against such; they must arm themselves to the war and *avenge the Lord of Midian*. God is a jealous God, and He will not endure that the hearts of his people should be turned away from Himself.

In this war with the Midianites, the spirit of righteousness did not get its full expression; in this Israel failed, and in this way they are a warning to us. "Moses was wroth with the officers of the host, with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle. And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass

against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord. Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman. But all the women children . . . keep alive for yourselves. And do ye abide without the camp seven days; whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves and your captives on the third day, and on the seventh day. And purify all your raiment, and all that is made of skins, and all work of goats' hair, and all things made of wood."

They were commanded to kill those whom they would have spared, and to purify themselves. In this they were brought into communion with God in the righteousness of his judgment of death on the daughters of Moab whom they would have spared; and they were cleansed from the uncleanness of all association with those that were judged. We must not spare any thing which the righteous judgment of God would cut off. In the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ we have communion with God in the righteousness of his judgment, but in our own deliverance from it; and thus we are cleansed from the uncleanness of the dead.

These two principles—the righteous judgment of God because of sin, and his merciful deliverance in Christ from that judgment—were both shown out in Phinehas at the time of Israel's sin with the daughters of Moab; and Israel had afterwards to be taught the same thing, before Moses, who led them through the wilderness, had finished his course with them.

As to the conduct of Phinehas, it is written, "And behold, one of the children of Israel came, and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman, in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose

up from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; and he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel. And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. Wherefore say, behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace; and he shall have it and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel" (Num. xxv. 6—13).

Two great principles were owned in the conduct of Phinehas.

1. The righteousness of God in the judgment of evil; and in this, *he was zealous for his God*. 2. The grace of God in the deliverance of his people; and therefore *he made an atonement for the children of Israel*. It was in connexion with these two great principles, that the covenant of peace and the everlasting priesthood were given to him.

The *jealousy* of the Lord was provoked by the departure of affection from Him which the tears of the men of Israel discovered, but here it was that zeal for God was shown in the righteousness of Phinehas.

In the war with the Midianites the children of Israel must be delivered from all wrong affection or corrupt association with any of the things that were to be judged, while they themselves were at the same time free from all that judgment. In the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ the judgment of sin is set before us; there we have communion with God in the righteousness of that judgment; but because of our association with Christ in judgment, we know our own deliverance in Him, while we also know

that condemnation is the portion of all whose part is not in the cross where sin was judged, but in the sin itself for which they must be judged.

In the war with the Midianites, the male children and the women could not be spared at all; they were to keep alive the women children, and they were to purify themselves and their captives, and be free from all association with those that were judged. With regard to the things kept from destruction, we further read, "And Eleazar the priest said unto the men of war which went to the battle, This is the ordinance of the law which the Lord commanded Moses; only the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, the tin, and the lead, everything that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean; nevertheless, it shall be purified with the water of separation; and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water. And ye shall wash your clothes on the seventh day, and ye shall be clean, and afterward ye shall come into the camp." Here we see that whatever God would have us take with us from the scene of judgment, must have its old associations put away, and be taken up in the power of the cross; and thus the water of separation was also used with regard to the spoil.

There are some things which God would not have spared at all—the male children and the women must be killed. There are other things which God would allow to his people—the women children they might keep alive for themselves and also the spoil; but they must purify themselves from the uncleanness of the dead, and they must also purify the spoil.

It is our wisdom and blessing to know what it is that God would utterly cut off and put the full power of death on; let us bow to this righteous judgment, and purify ourselves from the touch of that which is thus slain. Such is the judgment of God on the flesh, in which good is not;

and we must mortify our members which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience (Col. iii. 5, 6).

But there are other things which, in the days of living in the flesh, have had their connexion with it, but which God would have taken by his saints into their place of nearness to Him, yet not without being purified from their old association according to the power of the cross, being subjected to the Word of God.

May we war a good warfare, and cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, glorying in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

AVOIDING CONTROVERSY.

IT must strike every observer in the present day, that one of the great hindrances to the exercise of brotherly love amongst Christians, is the growing tendency to disputation and controversy about points on which they differ.

This is to be seen, not only in the violent and bitter strife which the Bicentenary agitation has unhappily engendered between Nonconformists and the Established Church, but also in the less systematic kind of guerilla warfare carried on in numberless little pamphlets and newspaper articles, concerning views of truth connected with the doctrines of imputed righteousness, Christian ministry, the law, worship, &c.

It may not, then, be amiss to consider briefly what light God's Word throws upon the expediency or otherwise of

such disputation amongst Christians; and (if it be found that such controversies must prevail) to suggest a thought which may possibly lead to their being so conducted as to avoid the evils incident to disputes amongst brethren.

And, first of all, let it be clearly understood that the subject proposed for consideration is the expediency of controversy amongst *Christians*—newborn, living souls, sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. It must at once be conceded that controversy must and should exist between the world and the church, between darkness and light, between truth and error.

So far from this latter kind of controversy being discouraged, we have the following Scriptures as conclusive authority for the necessity of its being carried on: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim. iv. 2); "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. iv. 11); "It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

But in reference to the kind of controversy under discussion, have not the following Scriptures some application? "Follow . . . peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient," &c. (2 Tim. ii. 22); "But avoid foolish questions and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain" (Titus iii. 9).

But here arise two questions, which it may need no little wisdom to answer (may the Lord grant it to the writer): What subjects of controversy may be thus avoided as "foolish," "unlearned"?—and on the other hand, how is faithfulness to the truth to be maintained, if we avoid

contending (even at the risk of strife) with brethren whom we believe to be in error?

The Greek word rendered "foolish" in the two passages above quoted, means, literally, "dull," "stupid." It is the word applied to the man in the parable who "built his house upon the sand," and also to the virgins who "took no oil with them."

Now in both these cases it was the end which showed the folly. In the case of the foolish builder, the house may have been ever so carefully put together, but the storm, whose probable or even possible approach had not been thought of, showed the folly of neglecting to dig for a sure foundation. In the case of the foolish virgins, they took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom; and then, not before, did it appear that they had no oil with them. May not this teach us that there is a solemn lesson involved in the use of this word to describe a class of questions which Christians are to avoid? They may be questions which, at present, from man's point of view, appear interesting, instructive, and profitable; and yet, regarded in the light of a coming eternity, their discussion may turn out to have involved mere waste of time. Viewed in the light of this world's supposed continuance, it were folly to avoid them—viewed in the certain passing away of the fashion of this world, the folly is to entertain them.

It would not be difficult to find illustrations of this point. Take the great, or, shall we call it, little subject of the Bicentenary agitation. If the world is to last for ever; nay, even if we are to have a thousand years' existence of the present state of things, however improved, it is a point of considerable interest and importance, to discover whether true religion be indeed so hindered in its growth (as many affirm), by its connection with the State, or whether it would suffer if set at liberty to support and defend itself. But if, on the other hand, "the coming

of the Lord draweth nigh," it is as foolish for Christians to waste their time in fighting about such questions, as if builders engaged in the last stage of a building, expecting the speedy visit of the architect for final inspection of the work, should fall out with one another about the arrangement of the scaffolding upon which they stand, and instead of applying their energies to the accomplishment of their real work—the building itself, should waste time and words in contending about the poles and planks which are so soon to be cast aside.

The exact point wherein lay the folly of both the foolish builder and the foolish virgins, was *forgetting the future*, while acting, perhaps, suitably enough for the present. And is not this the point where the folly of so many religious disputations of the present day appears, that, while contending about matters which are interesting in themselves, the coming of One who will set all these questions at rest, is forgotten; and thus brethren begin to beat their fellow-servants, and neglect to watch for their coming Lord.

It is said that, during the French expedition to Egypt, a fierce dispute arose amongst the French generals about some point of strategy on which they differed. When, however, Napoleon appeared amongst them, the dispute at once ceased—his master-mind set all to rights; there was no longer need to fight about a point which was at once settled by one to whom they all deferred.

So shall it be when the Saviour comes. There will be then no disputations or wranglings about points on which now the Lord's people are divided. It will then be known infallibly whether Church or State should have existed conjoined or separate; whether redemption be particular or universal; or whether infant baptism was right or wrong.

Is it then proposed to postpone all exercise of judgment

upon these disputed points until the Lord comes? Far from it. Every Christian is bound to act up to the light given him in the Word, in any or every one of these matters, and is responsible to God for such action. All that is urged is that, while acting up to the light we have, we should bear in mind the speedy approach of a day which will throw light upon, and bring to the light all these things. The thought of this coming, infallible decision, ought surely to keep us humble, and content to wait, in many cases, for vindication, till He comes whose presence will set all to rights.

On the other hand, let us prize dearly every grain of truth which we have received by the Spirit's teaching from the word. Let us hold it with firmness, advance it with meekness, and defend it, if necessary, with faithfulness; and when the attack of others has forced us to defend the truth committed to our keeping, let us bear in mind the advice of a Christian poet:—

"Be calm in arguing; for fierceness makes
Error a fault, and truth discourtesy.
Why should I feel another man's mistakes,
More than his sicknesses or poverty?
In love I should; but anger is not love,
Nor wisdom neither: therefore gently move."

H. E. B.

THE CONFLICT.—You may take the Lord's promise for victory in the end; that shall not fail; but do not promise yourself ease in the way, for that will not hold. If at some times your enemy have the advantage, give not all for lost. He hath often won the day, that hath been foiled and wounded in the fight. But, likewise, take not all for won, so as to have no more conflict, when sometimes you have the better, as in particular battles. Be not desperate when you lose, nor secure when you gain them.—*Archbishop Leighton.*

THE PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF A BELIEVER.

I.—PRIVILEGES.

IT has been happily remarked by a valued servant of Christ, that the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters of Romans, present a picture of the leading features in the believer's course. After the foundation of justification by faith is laid in the third and fourth chapters,—the fifth chapter represents the *privileges* of the believer; the sixth, the *duties* and *character* of the believer; the seventh, the believer's conflict; the eighth, the believer's *triumph*.

Perhaps we may find it profitable to turn our attention for a little while to this view of the subject, for we believe that confused notions of other privileges and duties respectively, have not only done serious injury to real Christians, but have, through them, indirectly hindered the great work of God in the conversion of sinners to Christ.

But first, what are the privileges of a believer? Not merely of some persons eminent for holiness, but of all who have truly come to Jesus, and, by faith, have laid hold of his precious sacrifice.

And, first of all, *his sins are forgiven*. It is not a *conditional* pardon, or a partial or doubtful pardon; not like the reluctant forgiveness man often extends to his fellow-man, but full and entire. The sins "blotted out"—"cast into the depths of the sea,"—"made whiter than snow,"—"remembered no more." And this is a matter of *fact*, not of *feeling*; it does not depend on our sense of it, but on God's word. And yet how many will not allow themselves to believe they are pardoned, because they say they cannot *feel* it. They do not consider that faith must come first, and feeling afterwards; they have had faith, it may be, to come forward and *ask* for pardon (and such faith, however

weak, will obtain it, for the very touch of the hem of his garment is life). But here their faith stops. They cannot believe they have received what they asked for, until they have some additional *sign* that their prayer is answered. Now this is a confirmation to their faith which the very nature of the case forbids. The cancelling of a debt, the remission of a penalty, is a transaction which takes place *for*, not *in* the debtor or criminal; his sensations of joy are not the *cause*, but the *effect* of his knowing himself free and pardoned. This needs to be kept very specially in mind at the present time, for many who read the deeply touching accounts we receive from time to time of the sudden thrill of joy which has been experienced by newly converted sinners, imagine that because *they* have not felt this startling burst of delight, they cannot have truly received pardon; whereas, a thousand causes, outward and inward, may modify the feelings experienced on receiving forgiveness, without altering the *fact* of that forgiveness. The knowledge and reception of free pardon, may come to the mind suddenly or gradually; the passage "from death to life" may take place as imperceptibly as that from winter to spring in our climates; the outward circumstances of the person who experiences the change, his temperament, education, state of health, and numberless other causes, but may affect the manner of his reception of the tidings; the reality of the fact cannot be altered by any of these things.

The fact of forgiveness is one thing, and the recognition of that fact another. And that recognition requires to be put on clear and simple grounds. The Christian's reason for believing himself pardoned, is not simply that Jesus died, for many who know this never appropriate the blessing; but that salvation is promised to all who believe, and he *has* believed. Jesus has promised to receive all who come, and he *has* come.

But many stop short with knowing they are pardoned,

and can realize no further blessing. They lose much by being contented to wait, as it were, in the lowest form of their class. There is more to learn. The Christian obtains not only *pardon*, but *free access* to God through Jesus his great High Priest. No blessings he needs can fail him, no help or grace in time of need be withheld. He who died and rose for us is now, every moment, ministering before God for us, ever living to make intercession (Heb. vii. 25).

How many griefs we bear for ourselves, which, if we realized this fact, we might lay safely on our High Priest! How many graces we are content to want, which He would be ever ready to supply! What a close and precious intercourse with Him we might have every hour of our lives, if we realized the blessings of his High Priesthood!

But there is more yet—a higher privilege which belongs to the believer. He is *one with Christ* (Eph. v. 30; John xvii.)—not simply a follower, a servant, but actually a member of his body. Christ is not only the Lamb who takes away sin; the royal Priest who makes intercession for his people, but the Head of the body (Eph. i. 20; Col. i. 22); the true Stem of the Vine (John xv. 1); the chief Corner-stone of the Temple (1 Pet. ii. 18); the Bridegroom whose Bride is bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh. "His people," to use the language of the old reformer, can "stand as Christ before God;" because He lives, they live. Their life is hid with Him in God. And this is not, as so many seem to think, the rare privilege of some few advanced saints, but of *every* true Christian—even the humblest, the weakest, the most trembling and fearful. "Ah, if I had faith to realize these truths!" exclaims some doubting Christian. But it is not any special realization of them that is asked for: it is simply to believe God's word. Remember, when you come before Him in prayer, that these privileges (not, *might* be, or

ought to be, but) *are* yours; and there is no need to wait for feelings. *Believe* and your soul shall live!

And connected with this fact of union with Christ, is the clothing of the believer with his righteousness (1 Cor. i. 30; 2 Cor. v. 21). And if so viewed, the difficulties sometimes complained of in this doctrine disappear: for it is not said that He *gives* us his righteousness, but that He *is* "the Lord our righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6). We are made "the righteousness of God *in* Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). And it is by virtue of this union that the Christian has fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The communion may be weaker or stronger, fuller or slighter, according as the believer realizes his privileges; but the *right* is for *all*.

Lastly, he is an heir of the *kingdom*; a "joint-heir with Christ" (Rom. viii.), even now, by virtue of his union, sitting with Him in the heavenly places (Eph. ii. 4, 6; Col. iii. 1), and with the sure and certain hope that the life now begun in his soul will extend at last to his body also, and that he will share the glory of his Lord, and reign with Him in eternal blessedness.

It would be strange indeed, if the unsleeping enemy of our souls would permit the Christian to enjoy the consciousness of such wondrous privileges in peace. He who said to our first parents, "Ye shall not surely die," is now equally ready to say to the timid believer, "Ye shall not surely *live*." The devices are many by which he leads them to ignore or disbelieve their privileges.

The most frequent, perhaps, is the error which forms the groundwork of most of the systems of corrupt Christianity—that which reduces the believer's privileges to a mere name, by making the title to them depend, not on a living faith, but on outward rites, and the membership of a visible church. When once this is granted; when baptised men and women are considered as united by virtue

of the outward sign, however received, to Christ, as his member, the promises to the believer become no longer those of *privileges in actual possession*, but pictures of what he *ought* to have or *might* have, if he reached some extraordinary degree of sanctity. The free gift becomes the reward of merit, and the blessing ends with being an empty name.

But those who are too enlightened to be led away by this delusion, are still often led by the same evil tempter to dwell on some fancied deservings, or frames and feelings of their own. As has been well remarked, he would fain keep the Christian struggling outside the sanctuary, instead of entering into the holiest with boldness, as all the humblest followers of Jesus may safely do. Let us come fearlessly, in the strength of his sacrifice and intercession. The enemy dares not attack us under the shadow of that Rock! With such privileges held out to him, can the believer fear?

(To be continued.)

“AS THE TRUTH IS IN JESUS.”

“But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”—Eph. iv. 20—24.

FEW texts of Scripture are more commonly misquoted than this one. The above clause in it being generally rendered “*the truth as it is in Jesus*” is in this form taken to denote the body of vital truth connected with the person and work of the Lord Jesus as contrasted with any of the numerous errors commonly set forth as gospel.

But it needs little examination of the passage and its

context to show that no such meaning was originally intended to be derived from a clause which, holding but a subordinate place in the sentence of almost a parenthetical character, simply asserts that the lesson which they had been taught (if indeed they had been so), and which the following verse explains to be the putting off the old man and putting on the new—that this lesson sets forth no mere sentimental theory, without a substantial basis of fact, but *is truth in Jesus*, and therefore should show results in those who are united to Him.

In other words, the putting off the old man and the putting on the new *is truth in Jesus*—has taken place in His person, in His death and resurrection. "Our old man was crucified with Him" (Rom. vi. 6). "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 9—11).

Two of our principal critical commentators thus explain the passage:

Ellicott says, "'*As the truth is in Jesus*' implies not (as Olshausen) '*as truth is in Jesus*,' which departs from the order, and involves a modification of the simple meaning of '*truth*,' nor (as it might have been expressed) '*as is truth*' abstractedly, but '*as is truth—in Jesus*' embodied, as it were, in a personal Saviour, and in the preaching of his cross."

Alford says, "So that the meaning will amount to this: if ye were taught in Him, according to that which is truth in Jesus; if you received into yourselves, when you listened to the teaching of the gospel, that which is true (respecting you and Him) in your union with, and life in, Jesus, the Son of God manifested in the flesh."

H. E. B.

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—X.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven."—John iii. 7—13.

THE first of these verses may be connected with the preceding, or with the following context. If with the foregoing, the meaning will be thus: seeing that the flesh and spirit are so opposed, and that men by birth into the earthly life have only flesh, let it be no matter of surprise, that to spiritual vitality, a new birth is indispensable. If, as perhaps is the preferable connexion, we join the saying "Marvel not" with what succeeds, the force of the expression may be thus brought out. Let not the doctrine of the new birth be rejected for its wonder; start not at the truth announced, because all about it cannot be made patent to human apprehension; nature has its agencies that are baffling to knowledge, as well as grace. The wind, with its hidden history and operations, may teach a man to believe, though he may be unable to comprehend, the duly-attested wonders of God's work on the souls of men. Taking this as the probable connexion of the seventh verse, let the emphasis given to the great doctrine of the passage by the renewed repetition of it be observed. A third time our Lord declares this immovable "must." "I said to thee," and again say it. Even to Nicodemus it needs to be spoken—"to thee." But not for him alone

is the word uttered: "Ye" men, born of flesh, whatever name you bear, must be born again, to be children of the kingdom of heaven.

Our Lord was in the habit, during his public ministry, of adducing simple and striking analogies from objects around, cognizable, at the very moment, by the senses of his audience. The sermon on the mount is full of examples of this. We are inclined to suppose that the eighth verse here supplies another illustration of this characteristic of the Great Teacher's discourses. It seems to us probable that where our Lord and Nicodemus were now seated conversing, the night wind was actually heard sighing overhead, or sounding among the branches of some neighbouring tree. Yet the analogy supplied by the wind is beautiful and striking, if taken quite generally. It will appear peculiarly fitting in connexion with the doctrine of regeneration by the Spirit, when it is recollected that in the language of Palestine, as in the Greek of the Gospel, the word for *wind* is the word for *spirit* also. For a soft wind, say some, a gentle breeze that stirs the leaves; but the choice of the word used, instead of a term suggesting stronger force of wind, may rather be accounted for by its identity with the word for spirit. Some would, from this circumstance, exclude the literal wind altogether, and read all as spoken of the Spirit only; but there is undoubtedly comparison involved in the expression, "So is every one." Of the wind thus adduced for illustration, three things are predicated. First, it is free: it "bloweth where it listeth," where it pleases. So uncontrolled and unfettered are its motions, that it is spoken of as in some sort to seeming a voluntary agent. Do we not familiarly say, free as the winds? Secondly, it is occult; "thou canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth"; merely heard, as we have supposed it then, by Nicodemus, the very direction of its current cannot be told

—and though this reveals its flow to the sense of touch, yet the origin and course of its stream who can tell? Itself unseen, its rise and fall are hidden and untraceable. But finally, it proves itself by certain known effects, “thou hearest the sound thereof.” It has a voice enabling you to say, unhesitatingly, It blows. You can see, also, what it does, though you know not whence it comes. “So,” says our Lord, “so is every one,” that is, so is it in the case of “every one that is born of the Spirit.” That Divine Agent works freely, quickening whom He will; not capriciously indeed; not without reasons, but sovereignly in relation to man, rendering account to none. These are sublime words, challenging a prerogative of which we must not rob the Great Supreme, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” Again, the Spirit works mysteriously; not without means, indeed, but still by his own hidden power within them all. You cannot find out the mode of his divine impartation of life to the soul. The knowledge is too great for us. But the result is not mysterious—the life you cannot see beginning, no sooner has begun than it begins to manifest itself. The new-born soul has a voice which proves its revivification; as we read of the resurrection of the young man borne out to burial, “He that was dead sat up, and began to speak.” “He unto whom the Spirit breathes,” says one, “begins to breathe from the Spirit. And you know the living soul, as you know the living tree, by its fruits.”

Still stumbling in the darkness of his Jewish prejudices, Nicodemus breaks out again into an exclamation of incredulous wonder. How can these things be? he answers, referring to the truths taught by our Lord regarding both the necessity and nature of regeneration and the work of the Divine Spirit in effecting the great change. Awed, apparently, and impressed, the Jewish rabbi cannot yet

receive the truth as a little child, and still marvels. The words of our Lord, in reply to his exclamation, contain severe reproof: "Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things?" "A master" might be rendered more emphatically "the master;" "the teacher," by way of eminence, implying that Nicodemus was held in high reputation for theological learning and wisdom. But we have no evidence of such special repute elsewhere, and the less emphatic form of our translation may be vindicated. Take it even so, and the reproof is heavy. "These things," after all, were elementary truths, and how could one who was a teacher be ignorant of them? How comes it that the master stumbles at the very tyro's lesson? It is implied that "these things" ought to have been well known to a Jew—that it was not necessary to have the revelations of the new kingdom to apprehend and appreciate them; they were truths that should have been well known in "Israel." Such they were: for they were taught clearly in the ancient scriptures, and, indeed, lay at the very foundation of all true religion in every dispensation. Change of heart, in order to sonship in God's family, was the very essence of the distinction between the people of God and the world lying in wickedness. What said the very law of Moses? "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Alas, what can the learners know, when the teacher is ignorant of this?

Wonder, moreover, as Nicodemus might, the doctrine was infallibly true. There is something very august in the words of our Lord which follow his question of rebuke, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know and testify that we have seen." We have once more the solemn formula of emphasis, pointing attention to the truth and importance of the declaration. But what is the meaning

of the "we" and "our" into which the "I" immediately passes? Is it the plural of dignity and authority? Scarcely. It is not our Lord's habit so to speak. Besides, the transition from "I" to "we" would, on such a supposition, be abrupt and unaccountable. Is it then, as some have explained, Christ and other prophets, Christ and John, Christ and the partakers of the new birth? None of all these, we are persuaded. Jesus is in this passage lifting his claims as teacher high above all human instructors (see verse 13), and that He is speaking of Himself as a teacher shuts out the idea of his associating with Him here the subjects of the new birth, true as it is of these that in a sense, in speaking of regeneration, they speak of what they know and see. Who then is associated with Jesus in this grand plural? The answer may be reached by asking, who else has been named by Jesus in the foregoing discourse? He has spoken of the Spirit, and now, we think, He connects His witness with his own in regard to the great truths he had been declaring. His own very testimony, indeed, was the Spirit's witness also, for He taught as full of the Holy Ghost. He declares the necessity and mystery of regeneration, by that very Spirit whose grace effects the change. How true, both of the Son and Spirit, that in speaking of regeneration, they testify of what they know. They formed the hearts of men—they search them through—they see the death and ruin wrought by sin—they know how the change from death to life can alone be produced. That very change, in numberless instances, had passed before their eye, nay, under the hand of the Spirit of the Lord. Ought we not to believe the Searcher of Hearts when He tells us what our hearts need in order to fellowship with Himself? Yet, our Lord, adding new words of reproof, says, "Ye receive not our testimony." "O fools, and slow of heart to believe," how is it that we so easily refuse "Him that speaketh from heaven," and reject the very witness of God Himself?

But the truth about the necessity of regeneration was not the only subject fully known and seen by the Great Teacher. He had other truths to declare concerning the grand scheme of human salvation. But how shall He go on, when the disciple is already stumbling and halting? How shall He declare higher lessons, when the simpler are not credited? "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" The force of the comparison instituted here, may, in a general way be readily exhibited. It is easier to examine a flower than a star; to find out the laws which regulate the flow of water under the firmament, in river or sea, than to know the balancings of the clouds—to see that there is some power which brings the unsupported stone to the earth, than to find the same power keeping the celestial orbs in their places: for the former of the objects mentioned in these contrasts are near, within our hands' reach, and under our immediate inspection; the others are high, remote, and perceived by sight alone. If, then, in any account we give of the first, we meet with incredulity, we can hardly expect to be credited when we explain the second. So with the simpler and the higher truths of our faith. The "earthly things" spoken of by our Lord, are doctrines of which the truth was capable of being recognized by human experience, which might be known and tested by man's own observation; the heavenly were truths to be discovered and accepted only by faith in a revelation from above. The first epithet is applied to what our Lord had taught to Nicodemus about the necessity of regeneration. Why is that called an earthly thing? Because a man might know it, or find the evidence of it, in his own heart, and in human society around him. That the flesh-born is flesh, even flesh itself might feel. If then this doctrine staggered Nicodemus, how could he be prepared to follow the Great Teacher, if he should go on to

speak of the hidden counsels of God as to the plan of human salvation. If there was ignorance or unbelief when the work of salvation in the soul of man was described, what would there be if its channel through incarnation and crucifixion should be delineated, or its source in God's love declared? We put the contrast thus, because, as we shall find, such are the heavenly things of which the Saviour afterward speaks.

There is a further thought which appears to us suggested by the contrast of the earthly and the heavenly in our Lord's words. The gospel age is the era of the kingdom of heaven. Jewish ordinances, on the contrary, are described in Scripture as carnal and worldly. The heavenly things may, therefore, be fitly regarded as those doctrines which are specially revealed in the new dispensation. Nicodemus had impliedly asked for information about that new economy. Our Lord had replied by a statement regarding an indispensable pre-requisite for entrance on the enjoyment of it. But the truth stated was one which might be learned from without the kingdom. It was taught by Judaism as well as Christianity; the law had it as well as the gospel-word from Zion. It was the very burden of the preaching of the prophet who came to prepare the way for the King. Now, if Nicodemus would not credit his Lord when declaring a truth with which, as a teacher in Israel, he should have been familiar, how could he be expected to receive testimony regarding new and loftier truths, belonging to the revelations of the kingdom of heaven?

Such new and loftier truths, Jesus the Sent of God, the Introducer of the heavenly reign, was about to unfold. The apostle Paul speaks of things revealed to the apostles by the Spirit which "eye had not seen, nor ear heard," nor heart of man received before. Our Lord in this conversation with Nicodemus, declares Himself qualified to

speak of things which no one else had ever been enabled to declare. For no one had ever ascended into heaven, where they were hidden with God, to search into them and bring them down to men. No learned scribe, no renowned rabbi, nay, no prophet of the Lord, had been privileged to study them. One only Teacher knew and could unfold them, for He had been in heaven; He had searched the deep things of God. That Teacher was the Son of Man—the incarnate Son of God. The words in which this is affirmed are very remarkable: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven." A hard saying this, surely, on the supposition that the Son of Man is merely man; unintelligible indeed to us, on any other supposition than that he is "both God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person." For say that the ascent into heaven is figurative, and means only intimate connexion with the Father, what, then, would be the coming down from heaven? Or say, that the ascent was literal, a rapture like that of Paul's, vouchsafed to Jesus at some former period, then what is his still being in heaven? The statement from the lips of a mere man would be without meaning; but spoken by Immanuel, it is sublime and glorious. The Son of Man was in heaven (not indeed that he needed to ascend thither—that word is used in the first clause, because for any other man to be in heaven it would have been needful to ascend), the Son of Man came down from heaven, the Son of Man is in heaven, for He is the Son of God. If the use of the title "Son of Man" suggest a difficulty, inasmuch as Jesus was not, when speaking to Nicodemus, up in heaven in that nature which supplies the title, the solution is to be found in the oneness of Immanuel's person. From this it arises that what is true of either nature in Christ may be predicated equally of the One glorious Person, the Word of God. Let it be added

here, that the very statement in this verse of the exclusive qualification of the Lord Jesus to unfold the mysteries of the kingdom is so made as to include the utterance of one of those mysteries. Here is the first of the heavenly things contained in this discourse—the incarnation of God's Son. If we borrow words from the evangelist in the introduction to his gospel, we may express the doctrine of the verse now before us in this manner: The Word who was with God, was made flesh; dwelling among men, yet being still, and ever, in the bosom of the Father.

The reader will perceive that here this wonderful discourse passes from the work of the Spirit in redemption to the work of the Son. The next section will give us more of this, before it leads us finally to the fountain of salvation in the everlasting love of God.

WORDS.

TO understand God we require to ponder God's words. We may read a chapter and get from it nothing. We may read a verse, and get only a good general idea of its purport. If we wish to look into the mind of God we must accurately weigh the *words* in the verse.

For instance, how often by omitting the force of ONE word is the whole force of a passage lost? The parable of the pharisee and the publican may be used to illustrate bad doctrine if you omit to mention WHERE they went to pray. The prayer is often made the great point in the parable. It is not so. The word "*Temple*" is the important word. They prayed in the blood-sprinkled place; they both went to the right place, they went where the blood was. They both saw the blood, but only one of them saw his need of the blood; one pleads his need, and he was justified then and there, because the blood was speaking

for him. The other went to the blood-sprinkled place; but he went to thank God that he did not require it; that it was of no use to him. Like a formalist and pharisee of the present day he names Christ; he goes with the blood outwardly to God, but his soul tells God that it is not lost, and that the blood he sees is not necessary for him.

Take another illustration: in John viii. 6, the Pharisees come to "tempt" the Lord. In verse nine we are told how they are "convicted" before Him, and in the same verse mark the words, they "*went out*;" they were convicted and then they "*went out*" instead of coming to Jesus. They ought to have sat down at his feet convicted. Now observe the first word in verse twelve, "**THEN**"—then when they had gone out and gone out convicted—"then," said Jesus, "*I am the Light*."—Those men came to the light, the light exposed them, but instead of following, they "*went out*" and walked in darkness; if they had sat down at the Lord's feet, they would not have gone in *darkness*, but in the light of **LIFE**.

Take another illustration:—The Lord says to Martha in John xi. 26, "Believest thou this." Martha wilfully or ignorantly turns away from that word "**THIS**." The Lord wishes her to learn about **THIS** resurrection, but she sees no necessity for such knowledge. She foolishly falls back upon the first elements she already knew and wishes to go into no richer or greater truths, she rather throws off the Lord's question as a wearisome one—"Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ," &c. She gives no answer to "*this*" at all; and when she had so said, she went her way and left the Lord, although he was condescending to teach her a truth she did not know. Soon after we find Martha opposing the Lord on this very point she was ignorant of—from ignorance she actually **OPPOSES THE LORD** afterwards, as we read in verse thirty-nine—she does

not wish the stone removed, and the Lord then reproves her, and reminds her of what she ought to have learned from their former conversation ; but Martha had formerly turned away from that little word *THIS*—hence error and reproof.

GORDON FORLONG.

OUR SANCTUARY.

"The place which is called Calvary."—Luke xxiii. 33.

"A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary."
Jeremiah xvii. 12.

ARISE! ye saints, to Salem's mount,
Rejoicing in that precious fount,
Which love hath opened wide;
Trace thence that high and glorious source
Whence it derives eternal force,
Its crimson, crystal tide.

See in the hour when Jesus dies,
The Lamb of God in sacrifice,
In sacrifice for thee,
His love, his dove, his undefiled,
Predestined, purchased, reconciled,
And charged all sin to flee.

"Complete in Him," through righteousness!
The Spirit seals that virgin dress
Which Jesus freely gives.
His seamless robe, so richly wrought,
Adorns the Bride he loved and sought,
"In Him" she ever lives.

His work of love is her defence,
And when He comes to call her hence,
To wear her righteous crown,
She shall behold his loving face,
And all his tender priceless grace,
With love's responses own.

CHARLES F. CREWES.

THE GRACE OF GOD THAT BRINGETH SALVATION.

NOW strangely perverse men are on this point! Because the grace now to be described does not extend to all men, and save all men, it is therefore denied; and the doctrine that maintains it is accused of harshness, unkindness, and cruelty; while, after all, those who deny it maintain a doctrine vastly more cruel, for they maintain a doctrine that consigns inevitably all mankind to ruin—a doctrine of salvation upon conditions, conditions which no fallen man, without the very grace here spoken of, ever did or ever can fulfil. Surely we would all heartily rejoice in the salvation of all. Surely our hearts' best feelings and affections shrink with pain from the idea of any human creature not being saved. But, surely, for this very reason, it is kinder and happier, as well as truer, to adopt what saves some, than (with the delusive appearance of opening a door for all) to rest in what saves no one, and can save no one.—*From a Sermon by Dr. Mc Neile, preached in Chester Cathedral.*

BISHOP HORSLEY ON ROM. IV. 25.

“Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

THE general meaning which is attached to this passage by ordinary readers is that which, no doubt, our translation would naturally suggest: that Christ was delivered to atone for our offences, and was raised again to accomplish our justification.

It is to that eminent scholar and acute critic, Bishop Horsley, that we are indebted for calling attention to the

inadequate conception of the full meaning of this passage, which our translation conveys. This he has done in an interesting sermon on the text, a few extracts from which will, perhaps, explain more clearly the reasons for adopting his view, than could be done otherwise; and this quotation of his own words may not be the less acceptable, inasmuch as the ordinary (1 vol.) edition of Bishop Horsley's sermons does not contain this sermon on Rom. iv. 25.

The sermon commences thus :

"The manner in which the apostle connects, in these remarkable words, both the sufferings of Christ with the sins of man, and the resurrection of Christ with the absolution of sinners, deserves a deep consideration, and leads, if I mistake not, to conclusions of the highest moment in speculation and in practice. The apostle not only speaks of the sins of men, as the cause or occasion of our Lord's death, but he speaks of the justification of man, as equally the cause or occasion of his resurrection."

The Bishop then proceeds to what he calls "the elucidation and improvement of this doctrine," dwelling at considerable length upon the doctrine suggested by the first clause of the verse—a doctrine, happily, less questioned now than it was then—the expiatory character of our Lord's sufferings. He takes some pains to show that "He was delivered for (on account of) our offences," cannot

"be expounded of the particular sins of our Lord's personal enemies; of the malice of the Pharisees who procured his death; of the perfidy of Judas who betrayed Him; of the injustice of Pilate who, against his own conscience and in defiance of the divine warnings, condemned Him; of the cruelty of the Jewish populace, who derided Him in his agonies. Of any or of all these particular sins of the persons concerned, as contrivers, as directors, as instruments, or as gratified spectators in the horrid business of his death, the apostle's expression "our offences" is too general to be understood. It can only be expounded of the sins of all us men, or at least of all us Christians.

"Nor is it agreeable to the usual cast of the Scripture language, that the persons immediately concerned in procuring and in executing the unjust sentence upon our Lord, should be spoken of as the original agents or causes in the dreadful business of his death. They were only instruments in the hands of a higher cause. This is implied in the words of my text, 'He was delivered for our offences.' These words, 'He was delivered,' refer to a purpose and design of God's overruling providence, by which the Redeemer was delivered over to the pains which He endured. The un-

believing Jew, the false traitor, the unrighteous judge, the unfeeling executioner, the insulting rabble, were but the instruments of that purpose, which, in some way or other, had a general respect to 'our offences'; that is, to the offences of all us men, or, in the most limited sense in which the words can be taken, of all that portion of mankind which should hereafter be brought to the knowledge and worship of that God who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, and by faith in the crucified Redeemer should become admissible to a share in those benefits, whatever they may be, in order to which the sufferings of the Son of God were ordained."

But not to follow the Bishop further in his arguments to prove (what it is hoped no reader of the *King's Highway* will question) that "He was delivered for our offences" means that the expiation of sin was the cause of his being delivered unto death, it may be well to pass on to that part of the sermon where the exact meaning of the construction in the Greek is brought to bear upon the explanation of the sense which is advocated:

"In the second clause, the resurrection of Christ is connected with our justification in the same manner as, in the first clause, his death is connected with our sins. As our Lord's death was, in the scheme of providence, the consequence of our sins, so, by the same scheme of providence, *his resurrection was the consequence of our justification.*"

The italics (which are ours) are intended to mark the chief feature of the Bishop's view. Our translation, as before remarked, might mean, as generally supposed, that the death was in order to expiate our offences, and that the resurrection was in order to effect our justification; but this the Greek forbids, not using the preposition *eis* but *dia* with the accusative, of the exact grammatical force of which Winer (*Grammar New Test.*) thus speaks: "*dia* with accusative specially indicates the ground, not the aim, and signifies *on account of.*"

"The English expressions (proceeds Bishop Horsley), it must be confessed, are in themselves in some degree ambiguous. That he rose again 'for our justification,' may be either an assertion that the justification of man naturally brought on the event of our Lord's resurrection, or that his justification is some future benefit, which the event of Christ's resurrection shall, in due season, surely bring about; and the latter may seem the more obvious

sense of the expression. But that this is not the true exposition, even of the English words, evidently appears when the two clauses are considered in connection : for as the death of Christ had no tendency to produce those offences for which He was delivered, but, on the contrary, our offences were the reason of his humiliation (and it were unreasonable to suppose that similar expressions should be used in opposite senses in different parts of the same sentence), our justification, for which Christ rose, must be something which, in the order of things, led to the Redeemer's resurrection. The original words are without ambiguity, and clearly represent our Lord's resurrection as an event which took place in consequence of man's justification, in the same manner as his death took place in consequence of man's sins."

In the next paragraph, the Bishop uses language which might seem to imply that he regarded justification as a benefit common to all, and in consequence separable from salvation; that is, that there might be a smaller number saved than justified. It is, therefore, but due to him to state that elsewhere in the same sermon he rightly limits justification to "all true penitents," though it must be owned "all true believers" would have been a more unexceptionable, because more Scriptural, expression.

Having thus guarded his words, it is interesting to observe how clearly he saw the doctrine of the real efficacy of the atonement as involved in this view of the passage :

"It follows therefore that our justification is a thing totally distinct from the final salvation of the godly. It is some part of the wonderful business of redemption which was to be finished before our Lord, consistently with the scheme of his great undertaking, could rise from the dead. It is something annexed to no condition on the part of man, a benefit freely and generally bestowed, without any regard to any previous effect of the evangelical doctrine upon the lives of individuals. Now this is easily explained if the death of Christ was literally an atonement for the sins of the penitent; but in any other view of the scheme of redemption it is inexplicable."

It is, perhaps, saying too much to state that "it is annexed to no condition on the part of man"; the very next verse (Rom. v. 1) reminds us of the inseparable condition, "faith": "Therefore being (or having been) justified," &c. Remembering, however, that this faith is the gift of God (Eph. ii. 8), and therefore while a con-

dition of qualification, no condition in the sense of performance, we have in these words of the Bishop a valuable testimony to the free and full salvation of the gospel, and an interesting proof of the real importance of the doctrine which he so clearly and ably exhibits, as set forth in this passage, a doctrine which Dean Alford has no less clearly detected in 2 Cor. v. 21: "He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," on which passage, and specially on the words "that we might be made," the Dean remarks: "The aorist (γενομεθα), which is far the best supported by MSS., also yields the best sense, as joining the whole justification of all God's people as one act accomplished with the sacrifice of Christ."

H. E. B.

THE PURPOSES OF SACRIFICE.

TWO purposes were in the first instance to be served by sacrifice. The first was to sharpen the eye for the discernment of the abominableness and damnable-ness of sin. Every one who presented a sin-offering, confessed, by the very act, that he had deserved death by his sin, and thus contradicted, most strongly and glaringly, that view of sin as a trifling thing—a peccadillo—to which the natural man is so strongly inclined, and which the Mosaic law constantly and industriously aimed to uproot. Sin-offerings served to make "remembrance of sins" (Heb. x. 3).

The second purpose was to naturalize the idea of substitution in the Church of God. "The idea (says Hirschen) carried out in the Mosaic cultus, that no guilt can be left as it is, that none is simply and without further ado forgiven, but requires in every case a fixed and definite atone-

ment, is a very remarkable one." By such means not only were the people of God accustomed to regard sin as a most serious thing, and prevented from frivolously forgetting it, but also the soil was prepared in its midst for the reception of the true mediation, so soon as in the course of history it had been accomplished. The hearts of Jews beat in anticipation thereof. "Moses (said our Lord) wrote of me;" referring not merely to the direct Messianic predictions contained in the book of Moses, but still more to that which the law prescribed in respect of sin-offerings.—*Hengstenberg*.

DO SAINTS IN GLORY KNOW EACH OTHER?

[The following letter was written nearly a hundred years ago by TOPLADY, in answer to an anonymous correspondent, who wrote to ask his opinion on the above question.]

IN reply to the question stated, I am most deeply and clearly convinced that the saints in glory know each other, and more particularly those with whom they took sweet counsel on earth, and with whom they walked to the house of God as friends. Our Lord Himself, I apprehend, gives us to understand as much, when He tells us that the elect shall be, in the future state, "equal unto the angels" (Luke xx. 33). Now it seems impossible that the unfallen angels, who have lived together in heaven for at least 6000 years, should not be perfectly acquainted with each other. And the same privilege is requisite in order to our being, in every respect, on an equality with them. The departed soul of the rich man knew Lazarus, when he beheld him afar off; and likewise at sight knew Abraham, whom he could never have seen in the present life. Much more do Abraham, and Lazarus, and all the glorified family above, rejoice in that communion of saints which obtains in their Father's house.

St. Paul, speaking of the spiritual children whom God

had given him among the Thessalonians, says that they would be his "glory and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus." But how could this be, and how could they mutually congratulate each other on the grace bestowed on them below, if all personal acquaintance was to cease? Surely there are no strangers in that land of light and love. The three apostles, who attended our blessed Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration, knew Moses and Elijah when they appeared in glory.

To add no more: that remarkable text, I think, fully establishes the point, where our adorable Saviour bids us make to ourselves friends by the mammon of unrighteousness, that when we fail they may receive us into the everlasting habitations. As if He had said, "While you are on earth take care to conciliate the affections of my indigent disciples, by bestowing on them a proper portion of the wealth which God has lent you, and which is too often perverted to purposes of unrighteousness by them that know not me. So when your bodies die, and your souls ascend to heaven, the souls of those poor afflicted saints whom your bounty relieved below, and who were got to glory before you, shall be among the first exulting spirits who shall meet you on your arrival above, and congratulate you on your safe and triumphant entrance into the world of joy." But they could not do this unless they knew us and we them.

May the precious blood and righteousness of our Incarnate God, and the faithful leadings of his eternal Spirit, bring you and me to that general assembly and church of the Firstborn!—where we shall both see Him as He is, and likewise know each other even as we shall then be known. With this prayer, and in this hope, I beg leave to subscribe myself, whosoever you may be, your affectionate well-wisher in Christ,

A. T.

MAKE SURE OF THE WAY.

IF thou wouldest so run as to obtain the kingdom of heaven, then be sure that thou get into the way that leadeth thither (John xiv. 6). For it is a vain thing to think that ever thou shalt have the prize, though thou runnest ever so fast, unless thou art in the way that leads to it.

Set the case that there should be a man in London who was to run to York for a wager; now, though he run ever so swiftly, yet if he run full south, he might run himself out of breath, and be never the nearer the prize, but be rather the farther off. Just so it is here. It is not simply the runner, nor yet the hasty runner, that winneth the crown, unless he be in the way that leadeth thereto.

I have observed, the little time which I have been a professor, that there is a great running to and fro, some this way and some that way; yet, it is to be feared, most of them are out of the way, and then, though they run as swift as the eagle can fly, they are benefited nothing.

If thou now say, "Which is the way?" I tell thee it is Christ, the Son of Mary, the Son of God. Jesus saith, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John xiv. 6). So then thy business is (if thou wouldest have salvation) to see if Christ be thine, with all his benefits; whether he hath showed thee that thy sins were washed away with his heart's blood; whether thou art planted into Him; and whether thou hast faith in Him so as to make life out of Him, and to conform thee to Him; that is such faith as to conclude that thou art righteous because Christ is thy righteousness, and so constrained to walk with Him as the joy of thy heart, because He saveth thy soul. And, for the Lord's sake, take heed and do not deceive thyself, and think thou art in the way

upon too slight grounds; for if thou miss the way, thou wilt miss of the prize, and if thou miss of that, I am sure thou wilt lose thy whole soul, even that soul which is worth more than the whole world.—*John Bunyan.*

THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD.

"In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in Him."—Col. ii. 9, 10.

THE Divinity of Christ is here not so much asserted as taken for granted, and introduced to show the nature of the mediatorial fulness or completeness which is in Christ. The thought is an advance upon John i. 16: there the only point urged is that his people—all of them—receive of his fulness. Here the Divine nature of the fulness is brought to light—all the fulness of Deity itself as to the body—and so the text is somewhat parallel to Eph. iii. 19, "That ye may be filled with all the fulness of God."

It was *as to the body* that the false teachers were misleading the Colossians. In accordance with the prevailing notions of philosophy (see v. 8), they were inculcating ascetic rules, and apparently making the observance of these a condition of salvation. God's way differs from man's in this, that while his word urges the need of putting the body under restraint (iii. 5), it is as possessing salvation already; whereas the error of these teachers consisted in postponing the question of salvation, and making subjection to "touch not, taste not, handle not," the first point.

All such notions, however, the word of the Lord chases away by making the *bodily* standing of the believer perfect, and that perfection—the very perfection of Divinity. In Christ (it being the Father's pleasure that all fulness

should dwell in Him) "dwelleth all the fulness of God-head *bodily*, and ye are complete in Him."

Mark the correspondence between "fulness" (*πληρωμα*) and "complete" (*πεπληρωμενοι*). This would appear more had the translation been either "in Him dwelleth all the completeness, &c., and ye are complete in Him;" or, as it has been rendered, "in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead *bodily*, and ye are filled to the full in Him."

H. E. B.

DYING WORDS OF A DEAR FRIEND.

FOUND IN PENCIL IN HER DESK.

MY DEAR FRIEND,— There is immensity in that word, "*clear shining after rain*,"* and what can give it such emphasis as when it is the dawn of that day which can never have its midnight? Does He not always surpass even the large expectations of his own? Does He not keep for us the BETTER thing? Press, press, press, on on, God make you, in very deed, an *able minister* of the *new Testament*; cause that out of you may flow rivers of living water. Oh, how one longs for new words to express the *inexpressible* depths of the Word of God. Yet a moment, and the fullest draughts will be ours. We *shall* drink of the river of his pleasures—we do drink of it now. In Him who is our ALL we have all. Oh, what a world of wonders, yet blessed realities. Now the real life seems begun and what did seem a dream is passing, almost gone. He *cannot* deny *Himself*, and up to the last moment *is* provided for. The everlasting God cannot deny Himself, and He would not be God did He not sustain, or did He give one unnecessary pang. Christ is ours,

Most affectionately and gratefully yours in

Our blessed All

* This was a text which had been sent during a season of deep spiritual conflict, and had been much blessed to her.

Yet a moment and we *all* meet together with the Lord in whom we are filled to the very full. . . .

This is *reality*, yet a moment and we shall be in the presence saying "Victory, victory."

Thanks. Victory through the BLOOD. Here is my abundant entrance. It is "*clear shining* after rain," just the dawn of the day which shall never know its midnight. Be of good courage, press on, on. Victory is ours, for Jesus is ours. He has triumphed gloriously. Good bye. It is so real. . . .

JESUS CHRIST, OUR HOPE.

(1 TIMOTHY I. 1).

Our *hope*, when wasting sin
Within the heart appears,
Like some sad blight o'er vernal scene,
Is Jesus Christ!

Our *hope*, when early grace
Distills its heaven-born sweets,
Like gentle dew on Nature's face,
Is Jesus Christ!

Our *hope*, when ripper years
Call forth the active powers,
Like shoots the forest proudly bears,
Is Jesus Christ!

Our *hope*, when all is fled
Of blooming years below,
As earth by wintry chills o'er-spread,
Is Jesus Christ!

Our *hope*, when failing breath
Denotes the conflict o'er,
As life gives place to certain death,
Is Jesus Christ!

J. H.

THE CROSS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

IV.—JOSEPH.

IN the last of these papers, in the number for May, we left Joseph a prisoner for conscience' sake. At home in Canaan his brethren had hated him because he brought to his father their evil report; a stranger and slave in Egypt, he meets with the same kind of treatment. The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. That path reproves the darkness, and the darkness will quench it if it can. No matter whether it be Canaan or Egypt, the professing church or the outside world, the shining path of righteousness is one of rebuke, disdain and sorrow.

When Jesus was on earth there were two classes of men to whom he addressed himself—the publican and the pharisee—the sinner and the self-righteous—the lost who must be sought, and brought home with rejoicing—and the just persons who need no repentance. The prototypes of these two orders of men are found in Abel and Cain, and in every age of the world the race has ranged itself under the banner of one of them.

Joseph met with their representatives in prison. The butler and baker of the king dreamed each a dream. The butler sees a vine before him, from whose branches he gathers grapes to press into Pharaoh's cup, and gives the cup into the king's hand. The baker bears upon his head three baskets, full of holes (see margin of Gen. xl. 16; and compare Haggai i. 6), and in the uppermost are all manner of meats, the work of a cook, which are eaten not by Pharaoh but by the birds of the air. It is the old story of Cain and Abel's offerings. The butler brings nothing that his own hands have made. The fruit of the vine cheers Pharaoh's heart, the butler is only his cup-bearer. No art of his has

spiced the wine, he presses the juice into the cup with a simplicity which even the bride had forgotten when she said, "I would lead thee, and bring thee unto my mother's house, who would instruct me; I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate." The wine that cheers the heart of God and man is obtained from Him who said, "I am the true Vine and my Father is the Husbandman. I am the Vine, ye are the branches." And whoso would give into God's hand the wine that maketh glad his heart must say, "I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of Thine only."

Alas, alas, how few are the followers of Abel, compared with those of Cain. A little child could be the cup-bearer of a king, but it requires skill to provide "all manner of meats for Pharaoh, the work of a cook." So reasons nature; and therefore men toil and sweat at the kneading trough and the oven, to make all manner of meats for God; refusing to stand before his throne and simply give the cup into his hand. But God loves little children. Babes and sucklings do his mighty works; and whosoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein. The baskets are full of holes in which the meats are borne, which have been prepared in the kitchen of the human heart and laboriously cooked by human hands. They are not food for God but devils, for the birds of the air are appointed types of the ill angels of the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

There are in the history of Joseph, as in all the types, many points of contrast with that of Jesus, which it is instructive to notice, because they bring into relief the excellences of Him who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, and made the transit possible by his own self bearing our sins in his own body on the tree.

Thus Joseph says to his fellow prisoner, "I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews; and here also have I

done nothing, that they should put me into the dungeon." We never find Jesus complaining thus. He came to suffer for others' sins, "Himself bare our sicknesses and carried our sorrows," and never even to the dear disciple who lay upon his bosom in the sacred intimacy of a friendship without a counterpart, do we hear him breathe a word in assertion of his innocence, or rebuke by self-justification the oppression which He endured.

Joseph's brethren say, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us and we would not hear." Whatever anguish was visible to human eyes in Jesus was not on his own account but because of the hardness of heart of those who knew not the time of their visitation. He never besought his brethren that He might be spared one sorrow which their malice could inflict. The decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem, ever present to his thoughts, was the theme of his discourse with Moses and Elijah on the mount, and doubtless with his Father in those nights of prayer when "every man went to his own house, and Jesus went to the Mount of Olives." But when He spoke of it to his disciples they understood not the saying and were afraid to ask Him.

These contrasts might be multiplied, but loving disciples will trace them for themselves.

The mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is often foreshown in the Old Testament. Abel rises again in Seth; Isaac is restored from the altar; Samson bursts the brazen gates; Daniel is delivered from the lions' den; and Joseph, accounted dead by his father and brethren, is found again of them in power and great glory.

It is not our purpose to treat very minutely of Joseph's life in Egypt, but there is one scene so full of meaning and of blessing that we cannot pass it unnoticed. It is when Joseph, having made himself known to his brethren, weeps upon them and they talk with him. "And behold

your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you." Benjamin was his own mother's son, and therefore he appeals to him, to assure them that, exalted as he is, he is their brother, bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. The relationship of Jesus to us is of the nearest kind. One truth, perhaps, intended to be made obvious by the prominence given to Benjamin may be, that Jesus is not a half-brother to us, as Joseph was to Reuben and the rest, but our very own brother. He did not assume merely the form of man. He is "very man" as well as "very God"—"the Seed of the woman." "For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

We are reminded by the touching scene before us of the evening of the resurrection day, when Jesus stood in the midst of his disciples and said, "Peace be unto you." But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And He said unto them, "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." How anxious He is that they should know Him as their very brother, appealing to their senses, just as Joseph did, "Behold your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you."

Nor was it only those to whom He appeared before his ascension, that must be assured of his relationship to men. The Holy Ghost points the weak and failing believer to his great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God; Jesus the Woman's Seed—for He never bore that name until He became Mary's Son. And He is qualified to be our Priest because, taken from among men, He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and can have compassion on

the ignorant and them that are out of the way ; for He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Never, until this is realized, can a sinner be happy in his sight. While they only thought of his glory, Joseph's brethren were terrified at his presence and could not answer him. But when he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept upon his neck ; and when, moreover, he kissed all his brethren and wept upon them, after that his brethren talked with him.

It is just so with Jesus and his brethren. Even John fell to the earth as dead when the Son of Man appeared to him in his risen glory. But when He laid his right hand upon him and lifted him up, saying, " Fear not ; I am the first and the last ; I am He that liveth and was dead ; and behold I am alive for evermore ; " then John listened to his words and wrote them to the churches. When we know that He who " is able to save to the uttermost, " " in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, " we feel that He is indeed our Brother, and we can love Him, though He be King of Righteousness before He is King of Peace.

The earth brought forth abundantly to Israel as well as to the Egyptians, but Israel had sent away their dreamer, to whom God in visions of the night made known his secret ways ; and while Egypt lays up food in store, which shall feed not herself only but all nations which will come to her for help, Israel knows not the time of her visitation, and the things which belong unto her peace are hidden from her eyes. " It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you ; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo ! we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying ' I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. ' This

was prefigured in the type before us. "And all countries came into Egypt, unto Joseph, for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands."

Joseph would not take their money. Salvation came to Egypt through their rejection of him, and he might well give them food from Egypt's granaries, without money and without price. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, how much more their fulness.... For blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved. As it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Joseph exhibits God's method of government. Not a monarch elected by the people; nor an hereditary king; nor an emperor who seizes the reins of government by a *coup d'etat*. Not a representative government; and still less a democracy. That "the people are the source of power" is a vain assumption, and that "the voice of the people is the voice of God" is a blasphemy and a lie. "He that ruleth among men must be just, ruling in the fear of God," and earth will know no rest until the Perfect Man shall sit upon her central throne.

Then, as in the days of old the wagons of Egypt were sent to fetch Jacob and his children, so shall the Gentiles bring them for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and in swift carriages, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord. And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the peoples; all that see them shall acknowledge them that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed."

For that glorious kingdom do we also wait, "For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer we shall also reign with Him." The Lord will hasten it in his time.

M.

THE PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF A BELIEVER.

II.—DUTIES.

WE have considering the privileges of the believer; we now come to the view of the duties which naturally flow from those privileges. And here again, the evil one has no lack of subtle snares into which too many Christians have fallen. Some he persuades to rest in their own doings in some sense or other; while others, who have learned to rejoice in free salvation, and to realize their acceptance "in the Beloved," are tempted to repose quietly in the enjoyment of their privileges, and to forget the *duties* and the *character* of the believer. They stop short at the fifth chapter of Romans, and forget to go on to the sixth. They stop short at "Grace hath reigned," and forget the verse which follows, "How shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

And it seems to have been to preach against this very error, that the sixth chapter was written, completing as it were the superscription of the "seal" mentioned in 2 Tim. ii. 19: "The Lord knoweth them that are his;" and "Let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Many, even of those whose lives are not themselves inconsistent, forget to dwell on the *second* part of the superscription in their teaching. We believe that this error springs partly in real and earnest Christians, from a dread of legality, or anything which might tend to place our justification on our works, and partly, from an impression that the believer's heavenly calling will make it almost impossible for him to fall into sin.

But it is remarkable how carefully the Apostles have guarded against both these errors. To the unconverted sinner they never dwell on holiness of life; they only bid him: "repent and believe;" but to those who at least pro-

fessed to have cast in their lot with Christ's people, their exhortations are continually to "walk worthy of their calling"—not that they *might* be saved, but, *because* they *are* saved. Legality cannot enter in, while we keep this distinction; and we can hardly go wrong in dwelling on the argument we find in the last chapters of Ephesians and Colossians.

Another cause of confusion on this subject is the ambiguity of the word "sanctification." The question, whether or not holiness, or sanctification, is a thing which admits of progress, has been much agitated; and, perhaps, in considering the theory, we have been led too much to overlook the practical part.

But often these discussions are in fact more verbal than real. The question first to be considered is,—What is meant by the word sanctification?

Primarily, the Bible meaning is evidently something *set apart for God's service*. In this sense, the vessels, the altar, the dresses of the priests, were all called *holy*; and in this sense undoubtedly, all true Christians are perfectly sanctified, or set apart in Christ Jesus. In *this* sense, certainly, sanctification cannot admit of *degree* or *progress*: it must be in itself complete. But the word is also used in both the Old and New Testaments, to denote the *character* which is fitting in things or persons set apart. The people of God are exhorted to be holy, because *He* is holy. Now in *this* sense it is clear that sanctification not only admits of infinite degrees, but of continual progress.

And in this sense, the sanctification of every true Christian ought to be his first aim. If we consider for a moment in what light God regards sin—what a costly sacrifice was required to save man from the eternal ruin, which was its legitimate consequence—how, even now, the whole creation "groaneth and travaileth together," from the eternal results of that sin, which we find on all sides defacing God's fair work, outwardly and inwardly, phy-

sically and morally—it will seem to us not only inconsistent, but utterly monstrous, that a ransomed and forgiven Christian should “live any longer” under the dominion of that very sin for which his Master died.

If his privileges are such as we have endeavoured to dwell on, the duties that flow from them must surely be to manifest to all, by his constant watchfulness against sin, that he is truly a pardoned and ransomed sinner; to be a living epistle, read of all; to show forth the holiness of the Master he serves.

“Ye are not your own: ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. vi. 20). “As ye have received the Lord Jesus Christ, so walk in Him” (Col. ii. 6).

But the next consideration is, how best to carry on this important work of glorifying our Master, by acting as living witnesses of his teaching. Here again, there are shoals on the right hand and on the left. On the one side is the danger already alluded to, of the Christian’s taking for granted that sin will have no power to touch him when once he has life in Christ, and thus omitting the needful watchfulness in his daily conduct. And the effect of this has been mournfully tested by the grievous falls in some who seemed to stand high as Christians, and the inconsistencies in the daily life of others, which sadden the hearts of those who love the Lord’s cause, and call forth a smile of triumphant contempt from its enemies. And if we remember the woe denounced by our Lord on those who should “offend” one of the “little ones” who believed on Him, and the heavy punishment which even when pardoned, David’s sin called down, *because* he had “caused the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme,” we shall see how God views those failings and sins which we often think little of, except when they affect our own personal comfort!

We need perpetual recurrence to the Word, to show us in what light God regards the sin, even of his people; for

our perceptions are so clouded by the sin-stained medium through which we view everything, that we cannot, without this true and clear glass in which to view the subject, form any adequate idea of it. In the two Epistles to the Corinthians, we see how needful God considers it, to chasten his people for their sins in this life, that they "be not condemned with the world." And though it is not for us to form individual judgments, as far as our neighbours are concerned, yet every Christian in looking back on his own life, will remember cases, in which his own carelessness of walk manifestly rendered chastenings necessary; for none of us estimate how much suffering we bring on ourselves by turning away from the gentle warnings of our Master, and thus making it needful for Him to use harsher means.

But besides the inconsistencies to which this careless view of the Christian walk leads many of God's true people, it also leads those who deal with the souls of others to be too easily satisfied with mere profession, or with superficial, though perhaps sincere, manifestations of feeling, without seeking for a confirmation of its reality in the lives of the persons in question. Far too much stress is laid on mere words, or sometimes on the abandonment of some worldly pleasures or pursuits, which may chance in some cases to involve no sacrifice at all to the young convert; while it may be that one earnest effort to overcome an evil temper, or movement of self-will, would imply a far more real act of self-renunciation. Christians do not sufficiently consider the shame they do their Master's cause, by letting the outward test of membership with Him consist in anything but the Scriptural one, of a holy and consistent walk.

But there are many of God's people to whom such cautions do not apply, for *their* dangers lie in an opposite direction. They are fully and deeply impressed with the paramount importance of all who belong to Christ walking worthy of their high calling. But they do not see the right

way of carrying out this high aim ; and often, in the midst of their earnest efforts, they feel as if they were labouring in vain and spending their strength for nought. They believe that the great object of a Christian's life is to *improve* his own nature, and seek by God's help to drive out every remains of the sinful tendencies of his heart. Conscious of the mighty power of sin, even in a pardoned and renewed heart, they "search, and try their own ways," and the search brings, as it ever must, deep humiliation at the inveteracy of evil they find within. Perhaps they have long been struggling with some special besetting sins, as pride, anger, or self-will ; and with deep and earnest desire to overcome these, they examine their hearts to see if any remains of such feelings can be detected. In deep shame and grief they bring their sin before God, and implore Him again and again, with strong crying and tears, to cast out the root of bitterness ; and almost while yet on their knees, the sinful feelings will rush back upon them in a flood ; and it seems as if the very effort to cast them out roused them to new life : or, when a temporary lull has been obtained, and they hope the enemy is vanquished, the next occasion of temptation overcomes them, they find again that they have been excited and bitter where they meant to be calm and patient, cowardly where boldness was called for, eagerly seeking human praise, when they thought they would have had no aim but God's glory. They wonder why, with so many prayers, the answer should not come ? Is not God willing and desirous to make his people holy and pure ? and if HE wills it, and *they* will it also sincerely, what is it prevents the accomplishment ?

Then the tried Christian looks inward again ; asks himself, if he *really* has desired this inward and outward perfect conformity to God's mind. He cannot but feel that he has, in spite of all hindrances and weaknesses, honestly desired to walk in the Lord's ways and keep his statutes, more than

all things the world contains: and still the efforts seem to fail. Then, indeed, he can realize the force of the seventh chapter of Romans: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Thus we can see how the seventh chapter follows from the sixth. When the believer steadily sets himself to aim at the Christian duties pointed out in the sixth chapter, he soon realizes the conflict depicted in the seventh.

Many, however, have doubted whether the experience described in this chapter can be that of a believer.

Whether any unconverted man could feel those ardent aspirations after conformity to God's law which are there described, is a question we may leave to others to discuss; but let the Christian, who is inclined to exult in knowing little or nothing of the experience of vii. Romans, beware, lest when he imagines himself *above* the state described in that chapter, he may in reality be *below* it.

But while most firmly believing that the experience here described is that of a believer, and that the most earnest and devoted seekers after conformity to Christ's mind are those who most entirely realize it, we must remember that we are not meant to stop short at the first clause of the concluding verses of the chapter. "O wretched man!" is followed immediately by "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And this gives us the key to the whole. CHRIST it is who undertakes for us; undertakes to free us from the *power* as well as the *guilt* of sin. And this gives us the secret of the failure in the endeavours of the Christians we have described. They failed because they thought the work of inward sanctification was to be done by *themselves*, with God's help it is true, but still by *themselves*. They thought they could improve the natural heart, and drive out of it the lurking evil. And this is as hopeless a task as to "make grapes grow of thorns."

(To be continued.)

THE WAYSIDE WATCHER.

"ALL the day you sit here idle,
And the Master at the door!
The fields are white to harvest,
And our labour almost o'er.
You are dreaming, you are dreaming!
Time is gliding fast away;
The eventide is waning,
Soon shall break eternal day."

"Brother, my hand is feeble,
My strength is well nigh spent,
I watched you all at noon-day
As I marked the way ye went.
I cried, 'God's blessing on them,
What a favoured band they be,
But I'll watch upon the highway,
God may find a work for me.'"

"Yet you tarry, yet you tarry,"
Said the labourer again,
"You may idle on the highway,
And wait all day in vain.
'Tis easy labour 'waiting';
On the dusty road we tread
To toil within the vineyard:
Go out and work instead."

The watcher smiled and answered,
"My brother, is it so?
Who waiteth on the Master,
The Master's will shall know.
He hath taught me one sweet lesson,
I have learnt it not too late,
There is service for the feeblest
That only stand and wait."

I sat me by the hedge-row,
No burden could I bear,
But I often thought, How blessed
In the work to have a share.

But the loving Master whispered
Through the often lonely day,
"Wait thou on Me, poor watcher,
The lame shall take the prey."

Not long I tarried watching:
A wayfarer drew nigh,
He was weary, sad, and hungry,
For the glowing sun was high.
His foot lagged faint and fainter,
His eyes were downward cast,
But I knew a morning labourer,
Who had near my lattice passed.

I drew him 'neath the trellis
Of the vine's inviting shade,
Down by the soft green pasture
Our Shepherd's love hath made.
I fetched him from the streamlet
Fresh water for his feet,
I spread the bread before him,
And bade him rest and eat.
He bathed in the bright fountain,
And then, refreshed and strong,
He journeyed on rejoicing:
You may hear his happy song.

Where, on the dusty wayside,
The traveller had been,
Stood One in heavenly beauty,
With more than regal mien.
"I thank thee," said the Stranger,
"For all thy cares afford,
For rest, and food, and welcome,
Beside thy simple board."

"Nay, Lord," I said, "what succour
Have I bestowed on Thee?"
"Thy service to my servant
Hath all been done to Me."
Oh! it was well worth watching,
To find the Master's choice,
Well worth the long day's waiting,
To hear the Master's voice.

Oh! ever blessed Master!
The harvest field is fair,
And Thou hast stronger servants
Than thy weak one everywhere.
But Thou hast ne'er forsaken
One waiting by the way;
Thou wilt meet him with a promise,
That the lame shall take the prey.

Still waiting by the wayside,
I heard a mournful cry,
A little child had wandered
From the sunny field hard by.
His hands were torn with briars;
His hot tears fell like rain;
And he wept lest he should never
See his father's face again.

Close to my heart I drew him,
And pointed to the sky;
I showed him how the dark clouds,
So slowly sailing by,
But veiled the bright sun's radiance
From valley and from hill;
But the faithful sun was shining
In all his glory still!

He listened—ceased his weeping
That told the childish woe;
Then on the way I led him,
And soon beheld him go
Back through the green fields singing:
Oh, blest the joyful sound,
That told the Father's welcome,
And the little wanderer found!

Then on the dusty highway
I saw the Stranger stand—
Stranger no more! He guided
The fair child by the hand.
"I thank thee," said He softly,
"Thou hast not watched in vain;
Behold my child returned
Safe to my arms again."

What grace is thine, O Master !
For work so poor and scant ;
And ah, what royal wages
My loving Lord doth grant.
I only saw a nurling
Was wandering astray :
Oh ! it is worth cross-bearing
To work for Thee one day.

Have ye known the shadows darken
On weary nights of pain,
And the longing hours for labour,
Till the night comes round again.
The folded hands seem idle :
If folded at his word,
'Tis a better service, trust me,
In obedience to the Lord.

Ye know the joy of labour
Within the busy field ;
But there are deeper pleasures
A loving soul may yield,
Willing to wait and suffer,
And listen at his feet ;
Of the far-off land He giveth
The fruit of life to eat.

In a narrow sphere of labour
My Lord my lot hath cast ;
He giveth royal wages,
To the first-called as the last.
I have seen Him in his beauty,
While waiting here alone,
And know Him ever near me,
For He cannot leave his own.

None e'er shall lack a service,
Who only seek his will ;
And He doth teach his children
To suffer and be still.
In love's deep fount of treasures
Such precious things are stored,
Laid up for thee, oh blessed,
That waiteth on the Lord.

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—XI.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light hath come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”—John iii. 14—21.

THERE are further revelations of heavenly things. The Divine Speaker unfolds new mysteries of the kingdom. Already has He taught us the great fact of the incarnation; He now advances to its grand purpose and end. He raises his cross, and preaches salvation thence by faith to the ends of the earth. Now the sufferings of the Christ and the calling of the Gentiles were taught in the Old Testament; but here they begin to be revealed in plain words, set forth in the dawning light of the day in which they should become facts.

The crucifixion is foretold in general phrase, and in connexion with reference to a well-known incident in Israelitish history. The reader can hardly need to refresh his recollection of the occurrence by turning to the passage in Num. xxi., where it is recorded. The sum of the story is to this effect: The people of Israel, plagued for sin with deadly serpents, were cured by looking to a brazen image of a serpent uplifted on a standard-pole. The

point of comparison in our Lord's saying, is the uplifting for the salvation of the dying. For, notwithstanding the able and ingenious arguing of commentators of high name, aiming to show how the serpent of brass could be fitly a symbol of the Saviour, we cannot persuade ourselves to see a type of the holy Conqueror in the likeness of the unclean snake, whose bite is death. It is true that Jesus was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh," but the serpent is not sinful human nature; it is the infuser of sin, the author of death, the devil. If direct comparison between the serpent and our Lord be admissible, the connecting link must be found in the element of curse. The serpent alone, of the three judged in paradise, was pronounced cursed. In this respect, the Blessed One was made as he. For he was "made a curse for us." He was treated, may we say, as if He were the introducer of death, not its destroyer—the poisoner, not the Healer.

But we prefer to regard the serpent raised high on a pole as a significant standard to be looked at as a whole, having this meaning: that which slays is slain; the destroyer is crushed by the gracious interposing power of God; the venom of the foe is made harmless. Behold the sign. The application is, Jesus has bruised the serpent's head; has triumphed over principalities and powers, making a show of them openly; has made an end of sin; has destroyed death. See all this done when He died on the tree. If we should interpret the several parts of the sign, we would say: the serpent is the devil, introducer of sin and inflictor of death, but here shown conquered, captured, impaled, harmless, a trophy of the power of Him who is set "an ensign" to the nations. But the prominent thought is, salvation is by the uplifted. And what was the uplifting in Jesus' case? First, the literal elevation on the cross is dimly intimated by the phrase (see chap. xii. 33). But the context foregoing guides the thought fur-

ther to the ascension to heaven by way of death. Thus the Son of Man, in his human nature also, is to be in heaven. The context following leads to yet another thought—the ascended Saviour, accepted of the Father as having finished his work, is revealed in a preached gospel, as given for salvation to all peoples. When the gospel of life by Jesus' death and resurrection, is faithfully proclaimed, the Son of Man is lifted up. The end is, that "whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life." Here, again, observe the revelation of a "heavenly thing." Christ's salvation is for men without distinction; for the word is "whosoever"—every one, believing, lives. It is proper to add, that our Lord's words do not merely predict here; they declare a necessity for his being lifted up from the earth. The "must" of verse 13 is to be noted, as one of many indications throughout our Lord's life and discourses, that his coming into the world was in fulfilment of a great divine plan and purpose, which it behoved Him to execute.

The Divine Teacher next led Nicodemus, and now all readers, to the great root of that blessed plan, the free love of God to sinners. The sixteenth verse is one of the grand, comprehensive texts of the Bible, that say the whole gospel in a sentence, and deserve to be stored in every one's memory. It is difficult to pass such a text without lingering for prolonged meditation. But we must content ourselves with brief hints; so plain are the words here that exposition is unneeded. We have now traced the salvation of souls by its great channel to its fountain. That fountain is the love of God. It is the love, moreover, of the Father; though we must not conceive of that love as older, or fuller, or more spontaneous, than the love of the Son and of the Spirit. Yet in the relationships of the eternal Three, as displayed in the covenant of redemption, we see the Father, to whom Christ offered Himself

without spot, first giving the Son to be offered, Himself also promising the Spirit to fill the Saviour, and be bestowed by Him on men; we see the whole scheme of grace issuing from the eternal depths of his mercy. This is important to be noticed, that we may avoid the grievous misconception, that the Son by his death produced love to men in his Father's breast. Christ's death was not the cause of God's love, but its effect; the proof and fruit of it, not its price. Jesus did not buy God's love for us; He bought us for his love. This love of God, fountain of salvation, was love to the world; to men, not to Jews; to men, as lost sinners; love that could have no complacency in their character, but which pitied and yearned over them, seeking to save and bless them. It was free, spontaneous love, welling up from God's own nature—God is love. It was the love, too, of a Father to erring children, not the compassion simply of a kind and tender heart, awakened by contemplation of suffering generally, but of a paternal heart, feeling for the misery, and grieving for the folly, of children. Just as God's love of delight is the exquisite joy which a parent has in sons restored, so this love of pity is over sons wandering and lost. Let us suppose that the father in the parable had had a benevolent neighbour, and that when the younger son was in want in the country, the report of his misery had been borne to the ears of both, how differently would the story of the prodigal's misery have affected the father's and the neighbour's heart! The measure and method of this love are next indicated—God^{so} loved the world as to give his only-begotten Son. One only Son He had, in a sense highest and most intimate, and lo, He gives Him up to save these pitied children of his creating power. He gave his Son; made a free gift of Him to man, as a Saviour, engaged to do all that was needful to enable Him to save; so the giving implied delivering Him up to suffering and death;

and *thus* God loved, giving his love a holy channel through propitiation. And again we have words which, teaching what salvation is, life eternal instead of perdition, exhibit it as free to every man. The phrase is once more—every one believing; and as faith before, from the comparison employed, might be called a look, so here it may be described as the acceptance of a gift. He who believes in Jesus looks to Him; the look saying, "I credit the message. I know there is a Divine Healer. I doubt not my welcome, nor the efficacy of the healing power. I apply; I expect; I live." He who believes says, "I am perishing, but God gives me life in his Son. I take the gift; I trust Him; I hold Him; I live."

For emphasis and assurance, the word concerning God's gift of his Son, to deliver men from perishing, shall be doubled (v. 17). The Jew expected his Messiah to be a great Subjugator—he looked for one to raise Israel, but depress Rome, and subdue the world; Jesus announces a far other purpose. The fears of men's own hearts might well have led them beforehand to expect that, if God's Son should visit earth at all, it would be to condemn and punish. But no, He was sent that the world through Him might be saved. Oh wondrous mission, beyond all range of hope, but surely revealed! The Son of God has come to seek and to save that which was lost. But will the lost world be saved? Will men believe and have everlasting life? The Son is sent to save, but all will not have salvation. The sun shines to scatter darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not.

Hence our Lord's further words, v. 18, "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." Salvation is here declared to be by faith, and is exhibited as escape from condemnation. He that believeth is justified. He

is in Christ, and in Him accepted. But he that believeth not is condemned, under sentence of wrath. Nor is it that he shall be condemned, but he is so already. How so? Because by nature men are sinners, and lost, doomed, dead; and he who refuses to believe in Christ, remaining where he was, underlies the old sentence and curse. There is no other way of escape; nor has God another Son to give. But, in another sense, he does not remain where he was; he has added the guilt and burden of unbelief. This unbelief is like a damning sentence already pronounced within a man's own soul. Unbelief says of the soul, "I bind thee over to death." It shuts out hope, and aggravates doom. This is indeed the grand sin of hearers of the gospel. Disbelief of the name of the Son of God! distrust of Jesus—saving name! discredit and rejection of "the Lord our righteousness"! the refusal of the gift of God's paternal love! It is not wonderful that it should be marked with special emphasis of reprobation.

This we have in verse 19. This is the condemnation. Here is the way in which men are shut up to heaviest doom. Here is their guilt and their sentence. Light has come into the world, and men love the darkness—choose the darkness rather. Jesus is the Light. Sin, error, the serpent, are the darkness. Does our Lord use this figure with a tacit and rebuking reference to the coming of Nicodemus by night? Has this, so to say, suggested the metaphor? Be that as it may, the imagery is what John, learning it from his Lord, has already given us in his proem to his Gospel. It is vivid, appropriate, impressive. What a strange, guilty, mad thing to hate the light! The use of the term *rather* is remarkable. Do men, then, love the light somewhat, but the darkness more? It is certainly implied that the light is perceived and approved; it comes to them in the character of light. They have some sense of it, as the diseased eye confesses the glory

of the sunshine, by the very pain which urges it to hide from the intolerable beam. Is it, then, that men really, for its own sake, prefer darkness to the light? No; but their deeds are evil, and they must have darkness to hide them. And this is the choice of *men*; human nature makes, of itself, no other election. This is the wisdom which belongs to men, as men. If among the Jews, in the midst of whom the Light was now shining, there were who received Him, their choice was not of man, but of God. They had received and learned of the Father.

In the closing verses (21, 22) of the passage before us, there is a repetition and expansion of the sentiment, that we are to find the explanation of men's rejection of the light in their love of sin; with the conduct of the truth-loving spirit contrasted therewith. He that practises evil things, hates the light, because he knows that it shows the vileness of his practice and condemns it; and lest he should be convicted and reproved as an evil-doer, he will not come to the light. He loves his deeds, and will pursue them; he therefore dislikes and avoids the light which would expose and condemn them. The Jew of our Lord's day, who practised what the law prohibited and sentenced, had only too much light for his peace in sin already; clearer light was dreadful to him: Jesus must be cast out. The natural man of any age, loving sin, has only too much pain from the light of conscience, and resists the clearer beams of revelation. Jesus must be kept out. On the contrary, the doer of truth, acting according to truth known to him, loves the light, wishes more, and when more is given, comes to it with desire; to test his actions more fully, and discover that they are wrought in God—wrought according to his will, and by his gracious aid. A variation of phrase, not apparent in our English translation, is worthy of notice. It is as if we should read, "He that practiseth evil things," "he that doeth the truth." Why not "he that practises

good things"? Is it to show that good practice can now be grafted only on the root of truth, brought to the soul by divine revelation? The application, then, of this statement will be to the people of Israel. The Jew, of simple guileless spirit, as was Nathanael, who sought to do the right as already taught him in Moses and the prophets, was indeed seeking after truth; and eager to prove himself, and discover God's work in his soul, would be found coming to the true light risen in Jesus, a humble and reverent disciple. It was his interest to get all that was false and unholy cast out—the greater the light, the more welcome. But one may safely add, find among men unacquainted with revelation—if such there be—those who, faithful to light within, are doing truth, and to these the presentation of saving light in the gospel will be welcome. The great principle of this contrast may be tested by any of us in his own experience. When is the Bible feared by us? When do we let it lie unopened? When we are conscious of a spirit or of actions which it would rebuke. When do we most joyfully open its pages? When conscious of aiming at the ordering of our way according to the will of God, as already understood, we wish to make sure of our course—when we can bend our knees and use the prayer of one of the writers of the sacred Book, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

God often allows an individual who has been living in the enjoyment of wealth and prosperity, to discover, at some period of his life, that everything is against him; that his way is hedged up, and that not with roses and evergreens, as it may appear to others, but with thorns. He may seek good, and eagerly pursue happiness; but he can never find it in anything apart from Christ; for, whilst stretching the hand to pluck the rose, he grasps the thorn. Yet in every step of this path God's tender grace has been saying, "Return unto me, come to me, where you will find life, rest, peace, love—but no thorns."

"OUR LIBERTY WHICH WE HAVE IN CHRIST
JESUS."—(GAL. I. 22.)

IF thou wouldest be faithful to do that work that God hath allotted thee to do in this world for his name, labour to live in the savour and sense of thy freedom and liberty by Jesus Christ: that is, keep this if possible ever before thee, that thou art a redeemed one, taken out of this world, and from under the curse of the law, out of the power of the devil, &c., and placed in a kingdom of grace, and forgiveness of sins, for Christ's sake.

This is of absolute use in this matter; yea, so absolute, that it is impossible for any Christian to do his work christianly without some enjoyment of it. For this in the first of Luke is made the very ground of all good works, both as to their nature and their continuance in them; and is also there reckoned an essential part of that covenant that God made with our fathers; even "That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life." (Luke i. 74, 75.)

And, indeed, take this away, and what ground can here be laid for any man to persevere in good works? None at all. For take away grace and remission of sins for Christ's sake, and you leave men nothing to help them but the terrors of the law and judgment of God, which at best can produce but a servile and slavish spirit in that man in whom it dwells; which spirit is so far off from being a help to us in our pursuit of good works, that it makes us that we cannot endure that which is commanded, but, Israel like, it flieth from God even as from the face of a serpent. As Solomon saith, "A servant will not be

corrected by words; for though he understand he will not answer." (Prov. xxix. 19.)

Get thou then thy soul possessed with the Spirit of the Son, and believe that thou art set perfectly free by Him, whatsoever thou by sin hast deserved at the hands of revenging justice.

This doctrine unlooseth thy bands, takes off thy yoke, and lets thee go upright. This doctrine puts spiritual and heavenly inclinations into thy soul; and the faith of this truth doth show thee that God hath so surprised thee, and gone beyond thee, with his blessed and everlasting love, that thou canst but reason thyself his debtor for ever. "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh," &c. (Rom. viii. 12.) That argument of Paul to Philemon is here true in the highest degree. Thou owest to God, for his grace to thee, even thy whole self besides. (Philem. 19.) This Paul further testifies both in the sixth and seventh of the Romans. In the one he saith we are free from sin. (Rom. vii. 4.) For, as I said, if either thy ungodly lusts, or the power and force of the law, have dominion over thy spirit, thou art not in a condition now to be performing thy work to God in this world.

I have heretofore marvelled at the quarrelsome spirit that possessed the people that Malachi speaketh of, how they found fault with, in a manner, all things that were commanded them to do. But I have since observed their ungodly disposition was grounded upon this, *their doubting of the love of God*. "Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us?" (Mal. i. 2.) And indeed, if people once say to God by way of doubt, "Wherein hast thou loved us?" no wonder that people be like those in Malachi's time, a discontented, murmuring, backward people about everything that is good.—*John Bunyan*.

"THE GRACE THAT IS TO BE BROUGHT UNTO YOU."

Now marvellous are Peter's words, "Be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 13). One thing that pains me much is my imperfect apprehension of grace. I want to grasp it—not to be like a man standing at the edge of the sea and looking in, but like *a fish in the sea* living in it as my element. But it will not be so always—now I "have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand." Then *grace shall be brought unto me*—I shall inherit it—"The God of grace" shall be my portion. "Grace led my wandering feet to tread the heavenly road," but the church shall then be in it, and the world shall enjoy everything from it.

The New Testament especially seems to bring out the former. The Old Testament the latter.

This is a most practical subject. In the New Testament, the resurrection of the saints and the coming of the Lord are used in every possible way for the production of holiness; and, therefore, we plead for it, because, if a doctrine is not received in a Scriptural aspect, the practical part cannot be realized. What should this produce? I answer—*desire*. Desire the Deliverer; not only believe in His coming, but *love His appearing*. He says to the bride in the Canticles, "The companions hearken to thy voice; cause me to hear it." And then there is a response, "Make haste, my beloved," &c. Desire blessing. Cultivate a spirit of receptiveness—a capability of receiving blessing. "You are called to inherit blessing." And desire a capability of imparting blessing. "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing."

One word to believers. Bring the two advents together: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing

of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." And keep this thought in your heart. All your future as a believer, is to grow out of *Christ's past*. If the future were to grow out of *our past*, it would be hell. But, if it grow out of the past of Him who died and rose again, what may it not be? Cling to *that*. Expect *that*.—*From Notes of an Address, by the Rev. J. Cox, on the Second Advent, delivered at the Barnet Conference, 1859.*

FAITH MORE THAN MERE ASSENT TO TRUTH.

A MAN may believe that food can nourish him : yet, if he have no appetite, and do not eat, he will die of want.

A person may believe that garments would cover him : yet, if he feel no inconvenience from nakedness, and do not put them on, he may perish from cold.

One may see a refuge that would shelter him from evil : yet, if he sees no danger, and do not run for protection, he may be at last surprised with destruction.

It is worthy of notice that the blessings of the Gospel are represented (in Scripture) under the images of food, clothing, and protection from danger ; and faith, by the corresponding acts of eating, putting on, and fleeing for refuge.—*Notes to Testimony of Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland.*

WHEN you put "the Ancient of Days" with the Infant of Days, and the shoulders of the Almighty, which bear up the universe, with the helpless crucified hands nailed to the tree, you will have some idea of the wonderful nature of the God-man.—*Rev. J. Denham Smith.*

NOTES IN EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.—XII.

BY THE REV. JOHN EDMOND, D.D.

"After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there He tarried with them, and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized: For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to Him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from heaven is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John iii. 22—36.

NOUR Lord's discourse, addressed to Nicodemus, from which we now part, may be said to contain, in epitome, a statement of the whole system of Christian doctrine. All the cardinal truths of the faith most surely received are taught in it, impliedly or expressly. We have distinct mention of the three persons of the Godhead—the Spirit, the Son, the Father. We have the doctrine of human guilt and corruption emphatically taught. We have God's great purpose of salvation unfolded. We have the death of Jesus on the cross exhibited. We have the work of the Spirit described in its nature and indispensableness. We have the office of faith set forth. We have the fruits of faith delineated. We have the final judgment set before us, with its

twofold awards—condemnation and everlasting life. There is a line of truth stretching from the depths of the eternity of God to the eternity of happy and holy being in the saved of mankind.

In the discourse of John, which forms the main part of the section of this chapter now to be considered, there will be noticed several very striking coincidences in sentiment with our Lord's teaching in his conversation with Nicodemus. It will appear from it how clearly, in the close of his testimony for his Master, the Baptist has been taught by the Spirit to apprehend the claims and character of the Messiah. We shall take notice of the correspondences alluded to as we proceed.

A few words may suffice to bring before us the occasion on which John bore this last witness to his Divine Chief. After the interview and conversation with Nicodemus, our Lord with his disciples left Jerusalem, and went into the country, and in some landward district of Judea, probably near the Jordan, continued for a time, attracting disciples and baptizing them by the hand of his chosen attendants. The Baptist, meanwhile, was proceeding with his ministry, and was baptizing in Ænon, near Salim, a place selected by him for the convenient supplies of water which it afforded. In explanation of this, the Evangelist adds, incidentally, that John was not yet cast into prison; furnishing a note of time, and supplying a confirmation of the narratives of the other evangelists respecting John's imprisonment, all the more interesting that the notice is slight, and that there is no further reference to the fact.

At this date, and out of these circumstances, there arose a discussion between some of John's disciples and the Jews, or, according to a preferable reading, a Jew, and perhaps one who had been baptized by the disciples of Jesus. The subject of dispute was purification. The disputants probably discussed the comparative claims of the baptism of John and

that authorized by our Lord—John's followers denying, it may be, the lawfulness of the latter; although the exact questioning can only be matter of conjecture. Unable, however, as it appears, to adjust the controversy with their opponent, the disciples of John came with it to their master himself. In the tone of complaint they informed him of Christ's baptizing, and of the general concourse of people that had been attracted by his ministry. They appear to insinuate a charge of ingratitude against the Saviour by dwelling on the facts that John had baptized Him, and by the testimony he had borne concerning Him, had introduced Him to the notice and regard of the people. "This very man," they say, "is administering the baptismal rite, and drawing the whole country after Him. Should his rivalry be suffered without rebuke?"

This murmuring appeal of the disciples, jealous for their master's honour, awoke no response in the bosom of John. The spark cast by their complaint into his spirit kindled no flame of envy there, nor had he any sympathy with their querulous insinuations. On the contrary, the report which excited their unholy grudge, filled his heart with all joy. In an address of singular pointedness and humility he renounces expressly all pretensions to competition with Jesus, proclaims his own subordination and insignificance, exalts the Saviour, and demands for Him the trust and homage of all, as the Son of God, whom to receive is life, whom to reject is death certain and abiding.

In this noble and exalted response to his disciples' murmuring, John begins by laying down a grand general principle, the due consideration of which should have kept them silent: "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven." The meaning is, all good gifts, and, therefore, among these, station, honour, and office in the church, are from God, who assigns to every one severally as He wills. John, accordingly, had his allotted place; Jesus, also, had his position, as the Father was pleased to assign. And who was

John, and who were his disciples, that they should arraign the distribution ? This was enough, even if Jesus had been but a man like John himself.

But, next, the Baptist appeals to his disciples' own recollection of a uniform testimony on his part, which should have prepared them for the fact by which they were stumbled. He reminds them, as they could not have forgotten, that all along he had proclaimed his inferiority to the Messiah, whose forerunner alone he was, not Himself. Why, then, should they be offended to see the harbinger forsaken for the King, whose advent he had announced ? They are reporting nothing more than the Baptist's own preaching should have led them to expect and desire.

Further, by a vivid and expressive similitude he gives them to understand that the facts which had awakened their envious displeasure constituted the consummation of his joy. This was the very result he had aimed to effect. He was sent to gather and bring a prepared people to the Lord ; to espouse the Church, as an apostle afterwards expressed it, " as a chaste virgin to Christ." And as at a marriage, the bridegroom's friend (one charged with preliminary negotiations, and with preparations for the festival) begrudges not the honour and happiness of the husband, pines not to see the fealty and love rendered to him by the espoused bride, but rejoices in it all ; the glad voice of the bridegroom proclaiming his joy, meeting response in the heart of his friend : so John, sent before to prepare a people for their Lord, delighted to see his labours successful, and exulted in the acceptance and honour of his great Master. "This my joy," said he, "is fulfilled."

Once more, the Baptist will have his followers know that they must hold themselves prepared to see their master's fame yet further eclipsed, while the glory of Jesus should grow. "He must increase, but I decrease." There is absolute necessity for the advance of the Master's honour and the wane

of the servant's. The great plan and purpose of God's love must be thus fulfilled. John's ministry had well-nigh served its end, and was about to close; but Jesus Christ, the Sent of the Father, should growingly come forth, claiming the attention of all, the Object of an ever-enlarging confidence and homage. This blessed necessity of progress has not yet ceased. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."

Beyond all this, John goes on to affirm the superiority of Jesus to all human prophets, and to state the ground of his indisputable pre-eminence. "He that cometh from above is above all." The meaning of the words, "above all," is restricted by the context. The universal supremacy of Jesus, his lordship over all creation, is plainly taught in Scripture: but here it is not so much this superiority to all creatures that is directly intended as his glorious pre-eminence among all human teachers. It was about the place due to Him in regard to one of these that the question had arisen; and the context seems to demand that the supplemented word here be not *things* but *men*. He is above all human prophets, instructors, rabbins. He is deservedly so exalted, for He cometh from above, or, as the last clause expresses it, "from heaven." So Jesus had said of the Son of man (ver. 13), "He came down from heaven"; and afterwards it was his frequent and, indeed, familiar practice to speak of Himself as from above, come down from heaven, come forth from the Father. Now this is language which could with no propriety be applied to his human nature. And, to put the reference beyond all doubt here, He is contrasted by John, in respect of his descent from heaven, with himself and like teachers, whom he designates in opposition as "of the earth." Christ cannot therefore be said to be come from heaven, because of his divine commission simply, for this was common to all the prophets; nor can this contrast be explained otherwise than by the doctrine of our Lord's divinity. He is said, then, to be

from above and come from heaven, because He was no mere man, but God manifest in flesh ; because, being in the bosom of the Father, dwelling in heaven, He had come forth, in the singular manifestation of Himself given in his incarnation on earth, to reveal heavenly things to men, and finish the work which should open to them a pathway to the presence of the Father. Hence his pre-eminence over all the prophets, his sole and unapproachable elevation above all men ; for the prophets, not excepting John the forerunner, greatest of all that had yet risen, were of earth—dust-sprung—mere creatures—risen from the ground. As the heavens, therefore, were higher than the earth ; as the upper sky overarched all things below—the loftiest hill as well as the lowliest vale—so necessarily, and yet more gloriously, did the heaven-descended Son excel and overrule all earth-born instructors. In the original there is a beautiful repetition which does not quite appear in our translation ; he who is of the earth is “*earthly*,” literally, and, I think, significantly, is “of the earth.” He is of the earth, wholly—he is a creature, and nothing more. Exalt a man as high as may be, heap on him what honours you may, elevate him by whatever singularity of privilege ; let him be a Moses, or an Elijah, or a John ; he is, after all, but a creature of dust, sprung of the ground. To all these the height on which they stood was a platform up to which they had been lifted ; the highest earthly elevation was to the Son of God a position to which He had stepped down. Between the earth-born prophet and the celestial Son there could be no dispute as to pre-eminence, unless the flower of the green field might vie in height with the star of the azure expanse above.

He who is of the earth, moreover, speaketh of the earth, which does not mean concerning the earth, but as one who springs out of the earth. His position is lowly, and his vision is circumscribed, and he speaks accordingly. His teaching has characteristics which bespeak his earthly origin.

He is a mere creature and teaches like one. John speaks not of uninspired men merely, the matter of whose teaching was always mixed with error, not seldom wholly false, but of inspired prophets as well, whose matter was divine truth, but who could only teach that truth as those who had the treasure in earthen vessels. In two grand respects the prophet differed from, and took rank far beneath the Messiah, in his teaching. His commission was indeed divine, and his message heavenly; but he could not speak in his own name, and could only utter such portions of the will of God as it pleased the Spirit to reveal to him. He spoke nothing from his own knowledge, nor by his own authority. But the Messiah, being the Son of God, while yet the servant of the Father, could advance his own supreme authority; He stamped his statements with the highest impress of truth, and the most imperative claim to attention, when He introduced them thus, "I say unto you." In manner, and in measure, the prophet, though inspired, spoke as a creature. Jesus, alike in the mode and in the fulness of his revelations, spake as the Lord from heaven. We find the same contrast which is stated here, instituted by the Apostle Paul in the beginning of his epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. i. 1, 2). A similar contrast is also made (Heb. xii. 25) between Christ speaking from Sinai, and calling to men in the gospel. The expressions in the twelfth verse of this chapter may also be compared with those now before us.

The words, "He that cometh from above, is above all," seem to be repeated partly for emphasis, partly to introduce what follows. To the statement regarding the mere human prophet, that he speaks of the earth, was opposed impliedly the affirmation that He who is from above, speaketh out of heaven. Here it is expressed, though in different words, "What He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth." He speaks from his own intimate knowledge, even of heavenly things, for He came down from heaven. In the light of our

Lord's discourse with Nicodemus, we may expand the statement thus. In unfolding the highest mysteries of his kingdom—in speaking of those eternal counsels which originated the scheme of salvation, and of the hidden divine operations which were involved in the execution of the plan, Jesus speaks of subjects with which He was fully, and by his own personal intuition, conversant. His knowledge of the whole mind of God in reference to human salvation was full and sure, like that of an eye-and-ear-witness. His testimony was competent, complete, and certain. Here the coincidence of John's words with Christ's own (ver. 11) is striking. Compare also chapter viii. 26, 38.

The correspondence of thought in the Lord's discourse and John's appears further in the clause, "No man receiveth his testimony." So Jesus had said, "Ye receive not our witness." The Baptist's words do not bear that literally none received the truth taught by Jesus; but, comparatively speaking, believing hearers were few, not worthy, as it were, to be reckoned. For where the disciples should be all, a few might well be spoken of as none. But had not John's disciples been telling their master that all men were flocking to Jesus? How is the difference between his estimate and theirs to be explained? By two considerations. John and his disciples look with different eyes on the scene—theirs are of envy, his of affection; and what to the look of jealousy seems a crowd, to the sight of love is all too few. But, again, John probably meant to intimate that many were but nominal and temporary disciples after all. To receive Christ's baptism from the hand of his attendants, and to receive his testimony, were different things.

The next statement by the Baptist (ver. 33) seems introduced to show how reasonable is reception of the testimony of Christ, and how monstrous and guilty is refusal to accept it. The emphatic word in the verse is "God." The "seal" spoken of is not the seal of authority, like the signet-ring

of Ahasuerus; nor that of security, as when they sealed the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre; nor of appropriation, as when God seals believers; but of certification or approval. It is like the stamp of the assayer of metals, or the signature of the auditor of accounts. He who receives a testimony bears witness that the testifier is trustworthy. He who receives a divine testimony bears witness that "God" is trustworthy. Now, acceptance of Christ's testimony was believing God, for his witness was divine. How guilty and unreasonable, therefore, was unbelief. It was a refusal to attest the truthfulness of God! It was charging God with unfaithfulness!

The Baptist goes on further to say, that rejection of Christ's testimony was more emphatically a rejection of God's word than even refusal to obey the prophets. "For He whom God hath sent," that is, from heaven, and by a special and pre-eminent mission, "speaketh the words of God," as no other messenger has ever spoken them. The affirmation is not simply that Jesus declared divine truth, but that He did so in a manner unexampled, so as to show his superiority to all the prophets. What follows shows this. "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him." The words "unto Him" are a supplement, but evidently correct, from the next verse. To others, it is implied, God gave the Spirit by measure, that is, sparingly; scantily. The endowment of the most gifted of all the human prophets was limited and little. To Jesus the Spirit was given unmeasuredly. Was this taught by the bodily shape descending on Him? "In Him," says Paul, "dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Jesus was as highly qualified for his office of Mediator as the Divine Spirit could make Him. He had all the Spirit—His highest wisdom, purity, zeal, and love. He was full of the Holy Ghost, and his capacities were such as the Holy Spirit never filled before. Other teachers were cisterns dipped in the fountain—this was the full and everflowing spring.

In predicting the bestowal of the Spirit on the Messiah, the prophet, uttering the words of Jehovah, had written, "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." So, when the Spirit came down on Him at his baptism, a voice from the excellent glory said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." So here the gift of all the Spirit is connected with the Father's love (ver. 35). This, it needs not be said, is love of complacency, confidence, and delight. Further, it is peculiar and pre-eminent love. In proof of it, the Father has entrusted Him with all He has. "He has given all things into his hand:" "*in* his hand" is the exact expression. All things are given so as to remain in his hand. The entire administration of the plan of redemption is entrusted to Him; the revelation and execution of the Father's will are evermore by Jesus. "All power," said Christ Himself, "is given unto me in heaven and on earth."

It is a consequence of this deed of trust that those who would obtain life, wisdom, the Spirit of God, must seek them from the Saviour. Hence we read further, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." He that accepts this Sent One, and relies on Him for salvation, hath it—in its commencement now, in its consummation surely hereafter. Holy, happy being; sanctified bliss; highest joy is his. He lives. On the other hand, he who refuses the Son of God, entrusted by the Father with all his counsels, shall not see life. So hath God decreed. It is the unalterable divine will that he who will not take life from Christ's hand must die. Nay, rather, must continue dead, for he is dead already. The wrath of God—his holy displeasure due to sin—abideth on him. It was on him, and it remains on him. His rejection of the only hand that could remove it, binds on him the awful load for ever, the heavier for his guilty refusal; for this is the case, not of the non-believer who never heard, but of the disbeliever who heard but rejected. And thus ever-

more comes out the solemn alternative—Believe and live, disbelieve and die. “He that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” “He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.”

With this lofty discourse closes the public ministry of the Baptist, so far as we have record of it. How meetly and how strikingly it closes! How this answer to his disciples illustrates in its tenour and progress his own words, “He must increase, but I decrease.” For as he advances in his argument he forgets himself; he passes on to bear a last testimony to is great Lord. The Anointed of Jehovah, the only Saviour, alone appears. The Sun is risen, and the morning-star hides behind his glorious effulgence.

THE OFFERING.

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust.”—Ps. ciii. 13, 14.

Nor within thy heart's best chamber,
In fond memory's fragrant amber,
Hoard the treasures God hath given;
For the moth of time will fray it,
And the dust of earth decay it;
Lay thy loved one—up in heaven.

He who lent it sure can keep it;
While He sees thee over-weep it,
Will He spurn thy sob of sorrow?
Tenderly He bendeth o'er thee;
Fortyfold He will restore thee,
In the cloudless land to-morrow.

Up the mountain—slowly—slowly;
For the sacrifice is holy;
Doth He call dead hearts to follow?
Nay, but living ones, well knowing
That the life-tide overflowing,
Pays no tribute cold and hollow.

Clings the sick child, faint and ailing,
Doth the mother mock its wailing,
Feeble though the hand that holds her;
Closer—closer to her bosom,
Will she clasp the fading blossom,
And in deeper love enfold her.

Wait not—thy warm breath may mar it,
Loving hands but bind and bar it
From a higher, holier soaring.
Now upon God's altar lay it.
Canst thou trust Him? Will He slay it?
He may prove thee by restoring.

Thro' the falling tears, bedewing
All the piled wood of thy doing,
Still He sees the altar raising.
Every silent pang is needed;
Not a tear-drop falls unheeded,
And thy grief shall end in praising.

Wilt thou trust Him? tho' He gather
Back thy loved one—'tis a Father,
And He knows thee sad and lonely.
Up the mount! One standeth near thee,
And thy sorrows more endear thee;
Journey on with "Jesus only."

Lay it down—thy heart's best treasure;
Christ alone the pang can measure.
Doth He count thee an offender,
For the trembling hand that brings it,
Or that sigh when sorrow wrings it,
O'er that love so true and tender?

Love, his love, doth mark thy going
With compassion overflowing.
Hark! He whispers, "I am with thee.
I upheld thy first faint struggle;
Child, I will reward thee double,
And thy treasure back will give thee."

Lay it down—beyond the river
Thou shalt praise anew the Giver;
Through a life of endless glory
Trace the path by which He brought thee,
Sing the melodies He taught thee,
Tell to angel-host thy story.

Faint thy whispered love is spoken ;
Ah ! thy words sound cold and broken
Unto hearts less fond and fervent.
Christ hath caught the sob that mourned it,
And his smile to prayer hath turned it,
While He saith, " My faithful servant."

Lay it down ! Ah ! thou hast laid it.
Oh, how fair hath love arrayed it !
But 'twill fairer be, and never
Shall the dust becloud its sweetness;
But, transformed to heavenly meetness,
Thou may'st call it **THINE FOR EVER.**

PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF A BELIEVER.

III.—DUTIES.

THAT Christ is our sanctification, in the sense of *making* us holy, as well as in that of being Himself our righteousness, and setting us apart in Him by his one offering—that in short, He must do the work *in* us, as well as for us—this truth has been brought before many an anxious and doubting mind, in some recent works, and proved an effectual answer to all their questionings. But the vivid descriptions of individual experiences which have formed the chief part of some of these writings, have perhaps left a lingering tendency in the minds of some, to watch for a special manifestation in their own souls, some crisis to be passed through, some sign which should show that the work in them was complete. But to watch for a sign, in *any* stage of our spiritual progress, will surely throw us back into despondency. Those who look for a spiritual crisis, to be recognized and felt at the moment by themselves, are going the surest way to hinder any real, healthful work in the soul.

But it may help some such inquirers if they pause to

consider *how* Christ will carry out what He has undertaken for his people—the work of inward purification. Such an inquiry is not a vain or presumptuous one, for it will help us partially to realize that work; and we may gather it from his own written Word.

From that Word we may learn that Christ does not purify his people by improving the old nature, not by ingrafting a *new* one in the heart. “Christ *in us*, the hope of glory.” We may see this in Gal. iv. 6, and v. 17; in Eph. iv. 27; Phil. ii. 13; Col. i. 27, iii. 32. That new nature may be very weak, feeble, and all but invisible to man’s eye; but if the sinner has really come to Christ by faith, that spark of new life is there,—and this he has to cherish, and to endeavour, at the same time, to crucify the old man or original nature.

That can never be improved; it can only be crushed and trampled under foot; for it is in itself essentially sinful and corrupt. On the other hand, the new man, the nature we derive from union with Christ, must clearly in itself be perfect and faultless, since it is a part of Christ’s own nature.

And this may explain the difficulties which have led to so much discussion, on the subject of Christian perfection. The “new man” is perfect: but the individual Christian cannot be, because he has still the “old man” or flesh within Him, which is so inextricably connected with our very being, that we cannot expect entirely to root it out while we are on earth. But it is most important to bear in mind constantly the great principle of the two natures existing in every Christian, and to remember that his object is to cherish the one, and to overcome the other. He is like one who has two stories, an upper and a lower, to his house. If he chooses to mount up, he may dwell in the higher storey, where pure air and bright sunshine are found. But if, from indolence or carelessness,

he remains in the lower one, he must abide in dulness and gloom.

And this gives us the true reason why such anxious Christians as those we have described, find their endeavours after holiness failures. In their efforts to make the old nature better, they necessarily linger in that part of their own minds; they look down, when their true remedy would be to "look up!" "Looking off unto Jesus" should be their motto—for it is by keeping up the communication with the original fountain that the stream maintains its purity. The new nature remains feeble and sickly unless it is nourished by continual communion with Him from whom it is derived.

A firm conviction that Jesus will undertake for his people, and cleanse them from sinfulness as well as from guilt, must be the foundation for the Christian's inward sanctification. The eye must be kept fixed on what He has done, and is doing, for us; if we too curiously scrutinize what He is doing *in* us, we risk the injury of that very work.

Let us seek, first, to settle it in our mind that his will is the inward sanctification of his people; and then endeavour to strengthen the new nature within us, by continually going to his fulness to have our emptiness supplied; seeking to realize his presence with us, day by day, and hour by hour, and to "abide in Him." But let us only think of our old original nature as that which must be contended with, even to the death. Then, if we want to know what belongs to our old nature, we have the clearest Scriptural precepts to guide us; and let us not neglect these. A ship guides her course by the stars, but she also needs to have the shoals and quicksands pointed out, on which she may strike, for the sky is liable to be obscured by mists or clouds. And so, the mists of our earthly and sinful tendencies will often obscure the clearness of our

look towards Jesus; and therefore it is that practical exhortations and directions as to conduct are so needed. We are told what things belong distinctly to the flesh; and anything which in us may lead to indulgence in the "works of the flesh," is to be as carefully avoided as a sick person would shun articles of food which had a tendency to nourish his disease.

There are, it is true, many daily cares and occupations which, as belonging exclusively to this life, must be liable to lead us back into our old nature, and yet which are not innocent but needful, and coming indeed within the list of our duties. These must be met with the rule in Phil. iv. 7, "In everything—let your requests be made known unto God." If we continually ask him for guidance and help in the daily affairs of our lives, they will have less and less power to bring us under the dominion of the old nature.

And lastly, let us never forget that the Christian's life is a *combat*. A war of nothing less than life and death, between the flesh and the spirit; and for this combat we are bid to put on the "whole armour of God."—Eph. vi.

And what is this armour?

If we examine every separate piece, we shall find each to be an attribute of Christ Himself. We are bid to put on the "girdle of truth," and He is the way, the *truth*, and the life; the "breast-plate of righteousness," and He is "the Lord *our Righteousness*;" the "gospel of peace," and He is "our peace," our salvation, the author of our faith; and lastly, the true "Word of God." Every part of this armour then is, Christ Himself. We are not only to follow Him, but to put Him on. So armed, and so clad, we need not fear; for as He Himself strove and vanquished the evil one, so, in his power, those who abide in Him, shall also be made "more than conquerors through Him that loved them."

One word as to the practical endeavours of the Christian to maintain a consistent walk.

To one so striving we would say: "Let your continual and honest self-inquiry be in all the transactions of life. What would be the mind of Christ on this point? How would He desire me to act? One such earnest self-questioning would often alter the course of a Christian's actions. We may often excuse to ourselves some action, or persuade ourselves of its necessity; when, if we brought it to this test, we should at once see it to be inadmissible. Secondly, we should seek continual *personal* intercourse with Christ. "Looking off to Him,"—again and again, whenever we are about to engage in any employment or be in the company of any persons with whom we may be tempted to the indulgence of besetting sins; asking for wisdom and strength *at the moment* of entering a place or commencing a conversation where they may be needed; this would save us from many a fall, and many of those errors in judgment, as well as the actual omission of sins, which bring discredit on our name and profession.

Thirdly, it is important to look on our faults as we would bodily diseases. Not as things to be acquiesced in as inevitable necessities, but as evils which must be cured, at any expense of effort and suffering. This is particularly applicable to faults of temper, which many Christians acquiesce in for themselves and others, as complacently as they might in some natural defect of face or figure. We have heard a believer spoken of as eminently holy, whose gloomy and morose disposition made all around him uncomfortable. And yet there is no fault which does more harm, in the eyes of lookers on, to the Christian profession, than the indulgence of temper. If we would be instrumental in leading others to Christ—yea more, if we would not be charged at the last day with the blood of those whom our inconsistencies have turned from the right way,

let us watch specially over our tempers. Let us treat them as we would a wounded or suffering part of our bodies—that is to say, while seeking to cure the evil, let us facilitate the process by guarding ourselves from irritating causes. If a Christian of frail temper would take as much pains to avoid conversations and companies which call forth his besetting sin, as he would to keep a wounded limb from anything which might injure it, he would escape many a fall which causes Satan to triumph, and the Holy Spirit to grieve. But the principle which can alone carry us through this perpetual conflict, is "The love of Christ constraineth us." Love, like sunshine, is the source of fruitfulness; and in the service of love we find perfect freedom—the liberty "wherewith Christ hath made us free."

"JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING."

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."—
Psa. xxx. 5.

"Joy cometh in the morning!"
What though in dreary night
The old year is departing,
The new shall bring us light.
The past time hath sufficed us
For tears, and doubts, and sorrow;
Time present is for labour,
But gladness for the morrow.

"Joy cometh in the morning!"
'Tis night till Jesus come;
Though stars shine brightly o'er us,
And flowers around us bloom.
Now we have but the earnest
Of what shall be revealed,
Like droppings from a fountain
But partially unsealed.

Lo, we're waiting for the day-streaks
To gild the eastern skies;
Our watch is nearly over,
Soon shall the sun arise.
Well-nigh the low, soft footfall
Of angels we can hear,
And the chiming of the golden bells,
Which tells the Priest-king near.

"Joy cometh in the morning!"
Hushed be the mourner's frown;
The dead in Christ, like seedlings
In wintry furrows sown,
Shall rise in life and beauty
When these dark hours are past,
More loving, pure, and holy
Than when we saw them last.

"Joy cometh in the morning!"
Creation waits and longs
To change her funeral dirges
For resurrection-songs.
Now of the tearful rainbow
Her loveliest garb is made,
Then in the heaven's own sunshine
This earth shall be arrayed.

"Joy cometh in the morning!"
O, Israel, it shall be
Indeed a glorious dawning,
Long banished one, for thee.
Transplanted from the desert
To where thy fathers grew,
Thou shalt be God's own lily,
And He shall send thee dew.

"Joy cometh in the morning!"
But joy alone for those
Who on a Saviour's merits
Their weary soul repose;
Who through the darksome night-watch
Have stayed themselves on God,
And, trusting in his guidance,
The narrow path have trod.

Brethren in Christ—oft looking
 For our returning Lord,
 Lay not aside your armour,
 Sheathe not the conquering sword;
 Faint not, nor be discouraged,
 The resting time is near,
 Before the new year closes
 Our Master may be here.

J. T.

"BY LOVE SERVE ONE ANOTHER."

"Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother. And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again. In like manner shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all ~~lost~~ thing of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself. Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again."—Deut. xxii. 1—4.

TYPICAL picture of Christian love and service; but, alas, how few apprehend it; and, if one among a thousand do so, that one is judged by fellow-men as a partaker of the sin. Does God take care of a stray ox or sheep? for an ox or ass falling? or saith He it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, doubtless, this is written. Suppose an Israelite had neglected this simple point of law: he would have been a transgressor. How much more guilty is that brother in the heavenly family, who hides himself from a member of the family who is judged to have strayed from the narrow path of righteousness, or to have actually fallen into some pit of error or sin. Blessed is that servant who imitates the Master in this. The Shepherd restoreth the wanderer. When he findeth it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing more over that sheep than over all the others that

went not astray, because it so magnifies the love, power, and grace of his salvation.

It is a beautiful picture. Thou art my brother; I cannot hide myself from thy pressing need. If the stray or fallen one is to be left unsought and without help, then of what use is the family unity? "Woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for there is not another to help him up. Two are better than one, for, if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow." It would be the natural instinct of the standing one to help the fallen one; and shall the children of this world be wiser in their generation in this matter also than the children of light? If there were no going astray of the children of the heavenly family, there were no need of daily exhortations; if none fell into the deep mire, no need of the washing; if none walked naked, *i.e.*, exposed themselves to observers, there were no need of the covering mantle of love, the love which covereth a multitude of sins. There have been and ever will be backsliders, "rebellious children," children ignorant of the Father's treasures in his house of bread, inconsiderate children, as described in Isaiah i. 1—3. Blessed are they who come to the help of the Lord against the destroyer. There are and ever will be leprous children, the outbreaks of sinful flesh. Blessed are they who can lead such to a true judgment of themselves, as Elisha led Naaman to the cleansing waters of the Jordan.

"Thou shalt not hide thyself." Where would the backslider stop, but for the brother who stands in the way, with the two-edged sword drawn, "coming out of his mouth," to teach, not in his hand to cut off? When would the sheep in the pit come up, if the shepherd helped him not? When would the leper pronounce himself clean, if there were none to lead him to the priest, whose eyes can see to the extent of the disease, who can pronounce him clean when the blood is offered and the water of washing is used? The eye of faith sees it and lives. If a brother or sister hides himself

or herself from a fallen one, such has no fellowship with the Father of mercies in man's extremity. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." And should there be none to help, now, as of old time, his own arm will bring salvation, perhaps by taking such erring one to his fold above. And is there one in that fold that has not erred and strayed from the path of rectitude?

God's uttermost is not original guilt, or actual sin before conversion; but every degree of sin in a *child*; therefore, the emphatic marginal reading for uttermost, *evermore*.

Love covereth, not by conniving at evil, but by converting the sinning brother from the error of his ways. The true loving-hearted brother is not to be hindered and daunted by difficulties. The wanderer is not too far away, or the pit too deep for love's effort, for the energy of the Holy Ghost. The word of God is a hammer, a fire, a sword. The more difficult the case, the more decided and prompt the help should be. When the Saviour says, I cannot or I will not save, then the believer may retire from his post; never till then. In how many instances our blessed Lord set us the example in seasons of man's extremity. The woman taken in adultery—"Neither do I condemn thee!" What an "uttermost!" the law condemned to death. The woman possessed with seven devils—another uttermost case: what a beautiful vessel of mercy did she become after his cleansing word! Legion testified that no case is beyond his uttermost. And the certain man who was robbed and stripped, and left half dead, was not too wretched for his uttermost.

The servant is not above his Lord. The Master spares, the servant need not despair. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing. The Master, as a servant, took a towel and girded Himself, and began to wash the disciples' feet. Only *began*, and many servants have followed Him in this work of faith, this labour of love, and still there is need! God's provision for washing the hands

and feet of his saints was pourtrayed in the brazen sea in the court of the temple. It received and held three thousand bathis (2 Chron. iv. 5). Beautiful picture of the supply of the Spirit in the Scriptures. Had the saints walked in the undefiled way, there would be no need of the exhortation, "So ought ye to wash one another's feet." He who created us knows our pre-disposition to evil. He who bought us with his precious blood knows that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. Therefore, He has put in us brotherly love, and bids us exercise the same. He has made ample provision for such service; and, when performed in the spirit of the Master, is certain to subdue and bless, to the perfect restoration of the fallen or lost one. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

REVIVAL IN HOLLAND DURING THE LAST CENTURY.

IN the period of great revivals in America and Europe during the last century, there arose a remarkable awakening in Holland. The Church had been wasted by the long and profitless discussions of different schools; truths perverted, as well as errors both of doctrine and practice, severed and divided Christians, when in 1740 tidings were heard of a revival at Amsterdam.

During the preaching of a candidate, named Gerard Kuypers, who preached in the Reformed Church in the absence of the habitual pastor, several persons were affected to tears and cries. The crowd pressed to hear, and the same effects followed. Kuypers felt that God had given him the gift and had blessed his word; he could not refuse to preach. Speedily reproach and opposition were employed against them, and he was forced to quit Amsterdam.

Subsequently, Kuypers being called to fill a post at Nykerk-op-de-Valuwe, the same effects as at Amsterdam took place; and one evening the whole congregation participated in the movement. They could not leave at the conclusion of the service; some were in tears, others prostrated, others had lost their consciousness. Many souls were agonized with a sense of sin. This impression resulted in peace to some souls; others continued in deep distress with the belief that eternal torment was their portion. Some who went to hear out of curiosity were affected in like manner with others. This state of things lasted for several weeks. Much fruit of blessing to souls appeared; but Kuypers, who felt that his word had been instrumental in producing such effects, and alarmed by the physical manifestations, exercised a proper authority to calm the disturbance of mind of many, and the desire he expressed that all such as troubled the service should retire was effectual in producing a more reasonable condition of mind.

The movement, however, spread far and near, and did not cease until the year 1752: These who were truly converted were distinguished by unusual Christian love and zeal.—*La Croix*.

THE BOY'S DREAM.—One summer's evening a little boy was sitting on the threshold of a neat little cottage in a country village, and, as the shades of night descended upon him, he fell asleep and dreamed. In his dream he was an old man with grey hairs on his head; and upon thinking over his past life, he said to himself, "I have lived these years and not known God, the Great Father. I have never thought anything about religion. Oh that I had my time to live over again! I would learn to live for some good purpose. I would strive to make myself useful in the world, and to know the Great Father of which the Bible speaks." The sun had sunk to rest, and darkness covered the face of the earth, when this little boy awoke, and found himself once more a child on the threshold of his father's cottage. He did not forget his dream; but earnestly sought Him who said, "I love them that love me, and those who seek me early shall find me." Nor did he seek in vain.

THE King's Highway.

THE LITTLE FOX: OR BROKEN COMMUNION.

A TRUE NARRATIVE OF THE DAYS OF WHITEFIELD.

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines; for our vines have tender grapes."—Canticles ii. 15.

CHRISTINE is the name of her who, though being dead yet speaks, through this brief record of one who lived in fellowship with God. Nor is the name a fictitious one to harmonize with my narrative. When the parents of the unconscious infant were led to choose it for her, they did not, *even by faith, divine* how fitly it would apply to her in future years, when the child of sin and the subject of Satan should be made, through the precious blood of the covenant, a child of God, a joint-heir with Christ.

She was of middle age, unmarried, infirm in body, and, in its full sense, "a stranger here," when she was first known to the dear sainted friend to whom I was indebted in my early spiritual life for this and other incidents in her history.

Christine rented a small house in an obscure country town in the south of England, at the time that Whitefield's trumpet-voice startled many a slumberer to the mighty realities of everlasting life and death, while he brought prominently before the self-satisfied religionist the absolute necessity of being born again of the Holy Spirit of God.

The brave preacher, in the fervour of his first love en-

dowed with a noble presence and soul-subduing eloquence, had his service in the sight of thousands, and this simple, secluded woman had none the less her place in the vineyard. The son, working in the noonday of alternate success and persecution, bringing visible trophies of divine grace to the feet of Him who went before him, was not one whit more acceptable to our heavenly Master than the solitary daughter of poverty, who laid herself out hour by hour to learn the will of the Father by the Spirit, and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

The worldling said that Christine had known "better days." The lone woman herself never said so. Looking back on a youth spent without a knowledge of God, though possessing externally more than the needful convenience of existence, she sorrowed not for her lost patrimony whatever it was. Her heavenly inheritance beamed brighter and more bright in the light of revelation; but for her best days she waited still, when her earthly house of this tabernacle should be dissolved, and she should take possession of the home her Lord had gone to prepare for her, "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Many of the Master's servants at this, and even a later period, have dwelt much upon his command, "Occupy till I come"; but, contented with the "occupation," they have overlooked the watchfulness that it enjoins, while the soul-sustaining promise of the return of the Lord Jesus, delivered to the apostles, was neglected altogether in the teaching of that day, and it seems to have had the same reviving influence as prior to the days of Pentecost. The soul that has waited and watched for the Lord long loved, marvels not that the quickening of that blessed hope by the Holy Spirit should awaken the long-slumbering Bride from her supineness, and lead her to arise and make herself ready, "for yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

How much the reception of this much-neglected truth has influenced the church, and brought forth the blessed fruit in the Revival of the last few years, we know not now, but we shall know hereafter. Certain it is that it has been received and cherished by those taught of God, as the quickener of their tardy desires towards the beholding of Him whom not having seen they love; and this not from its forming a part of man's ministration, but by the testimony of the Spirit through the Word to the heart of God's hidden worshippers known but to Himself, that "seven thousand" scattered in our great cities and in the distant provinces and elsewhere. There have been—blessed be God! there are now, many whose sorrow has been turned into joy by this life-giving promise. Even as the apostles were comforted by that same welcome assurance from angel messengers, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

This same Jesus! the object of the bereaved apostles' longing desire—was the same Jesus for whom Christine waited; her Friend; her Counsellor; the confidant of all her troubles and the overflowing spring of her joys. For Him she lived, for Him she watched, as those that watch for the morning.

When I inquired if she belonged to any denominational form of worship, my old friend replied, "I was but young at the time, but I remember they called her a Bible Christian. I suppose that might be because she loved her Bible.

While I knew her she was often too infirm to walk to the place of prayer, though when she first came to the town, I had seen her there. God's truth was but little cared for in that dark, slumberous place. Somehow Christine was not like any one else; some were afraid of her, others disliked her, and she exercised an influence over those who were much

with her that could only arise from her power with God; but some Christian people, such as I knew then, called her "a 'peculiar' woman."

This peculiarity consisted in living in the world, and not of it. It is as easy for this distinction to be visible, and acknowledged in the lower class of life as in the most exalted rank. The epithet cast upon the children of God by a Christ-rejecting world is the one the Lord Himself has chosen to express their preciousness in his sight (Deut. xiv. 2; Ex. xix. 5).

Oh that we could more frequently obtain the distinction in the world's eyes; and while they bestow it, as on those who are fools for Christ's sake, let such as receive it, remember it is the title of loving appropriation which the Lord of Glory bestows upon his Church. His "peculiar treasure." We too little know the honour of bearing reproach for the sake of Jesus. Did we walk in faithfulness to those who are without, we should oftener be called on to rejoice that the "all manner of evil" is spoken against us falsely, and be more deeply humbled when it wounds, from the truth mingled in the accuser's wrath, the result of careless walking or the lack of love.

Christine was content to be called "peculiar," if, indeed, she ever knew it; but she was shunned rather than sought by the idle gossips and the cold professors around her.

She kept a small fruiterer's shop; how she made her profits none could tell; but profit she did, and the untold treasures she laid up from it we have yet to learn when she brings the burden of her golden sheaf to the feet of the harvest Lord.

Her fruit was always the best. Blighted orchards and wet seasons never appeared to affect the prosperity of the placid fruit merchant. Curious eyes watched her narrowly, and many looked on, expecting an end must come when times were the worst; but the oil never failed, and the meal wasted

not, for the blessing which multiplied the seven barley loaves rested on the store of the stranger.

She did not watch the clouds, either for sowing or reaping, but sang with the prophet of old, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places." We know it was well with Christine. Her occupation was her net thrown for her Master, for Christine was a fisher of men, and in the purchase of her merchandise, as in the most trifling sale, she traded for heaven. Her shop, though on so humble a scale, was always the neatest and best arranged in the place; her fruit was the freshest and cheapest, and many who did not love Christine and Christine's strange ways, chose, nevertheless, to deal with her—they liked her honesty.

With her Bible by her side, with which she feasted her soul, she might be seen day by day in the summer through the low hatch door, sitting, calm, and far happier than a queen upon her throne, seeing that the foundation on which her possessions rested could not be shaken by the world's earthquake.

In winter days her customers sought her in her kitchen by the bright wood fire, and here those who loved to listen to her liked best to find her. "Those hours I spent with her *there*," said my old friend, "were like heaven, and I shall never forget them." And later, when I stood by the death-bed of Christine's friend, and her failing eyes could not recognize my face, though she knew my voice, I said, "Amongst other joys of heaven, you will see your dear Christine!" and the bright smile that was her only answer showed how tenderly the soul-link was cherished, which had been used by

a gracious Father to draw her nearer to that home she was about entering. And how much more precious than any natural ties are the eternal ones knit in Jesus, intensifying as we drop the veil of flesh which separates us from the land of eternal love.

Most of the boys of the town frequented the little fruit shop, although it was in the outskirts, and many a rude rough youth did not go there in vain. The motherless and the orphan could tell more of Christine's kindness than the others, though she had a word and a warning for all. But still they went, for though she told them, "The wages of sin is death," and proved it by "It is written" in the well-worn Bible by her side, yet they never insulted the gentle woman, for she always gave them good fruit and plenty of it for their money. The young servant maids often lent an unwilling ear to her holy counsel, but they would rather go to her shop than elsewhere, and even ladies from the neighbourhood would call at her little store, though rather from curiosity than any other motive; yet some found a deeper interest in her than in her singularity, which mainly consisted in her simple faithful walk, and from never having mingled with, or imbibed the phraseology of, sectarianism.

Christine did not think that rude boys and young servant maids were in any greater danger of eternal death, than the lady or gentleman who with no better aim sought her little hallowed counter. The carnal professor was as deep an object of her pity and her prayers as the ignorant poor. Corruption, born of the old Adam, was the same, whether covered with linsey rags or brocaded silk. All needed a Saviour. Each must live here—and die; each must die or live—eternally. Oh that *we* who know the value of the precious blood and the day of grace were as ready to accost the decent church-goer who we know is slumbering on the edge of the gulf, as to preach to the poor outcast who never dreams of entering the house of prayer.

Christine knew the value of the pearl ; she would tell of its priceless worth to those who knew it not, who had seen no beauty in it that they should desire it ; but the special mission for which she appeared to have received her desert teaching, was to speak of the treasure-house and its varied glories with those who knew like herself what it was to have communion with the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Her shop was opened and closed at regular and early hours. She never suffered her daily calling to trespass on the time she set apart for the quiet searching of the Scriptures. In the King's countenance she had found life, and his favour as a cloud of the latter rain. She waited for the unfolding of those precious things which the Holy Ghost delights to make known to the thirsting spirit. Nay, there were days when the shutters remained closed, the door was locked, and none answered from within. The neighbours said she was gone on a journey ; it must have been at dawn, for no one saw her go forth, and she was supposed to be away making some of her successful bargains. But she was a peculiar woman, and none presumed to say, "Where hast thou been?"

Oh, that many more of our trading friends knew the value of such hours gathered from the busy cares of life and spent in that same right Royal Exchange—that in the lawful calling of the busy counting-house and the thriving shop, they were still about their Father's business, so that, when missed for a brief hour from their accustomed spot, their time had been engaged in special traffic for heavenly things. Then the lowing of the oxen, and the bleating of the sheep, and the ring of the gold and silver, would not be heard in the temple as now, but the incense of grateful hearts, the sacrifice of a broken spirit! Oh, try it! Get a nearer view of the King in his beauty. Carry to Him the cares that have clouded your brow and corroded your mind with their perplexing accumulations, and receive instead thereof, wisdom to guide, and sympathy that can meet your every need, the sympathy of Jesus!

Spread before Him every burden that can harass or disturb the serenity of his servant. Tell over to his ever-attentive ear the fears or distresses to which no one else will care to listen, and perhaps none other could understand. Drag forth your enemies who are his enemies, and bring them to his feet, that the Lord strong and mighty in battle may slay them, and in their place receive the sense of peace and freedom which the coffers of gold could not purchase. Oh, try it, dear trading friends! "It is not religion to neglect our daily calling, and to be absent from our shops," I hear you object. When a great man's dead body is carried through the city, a hero or statesman, or one of royal blood, it is thought no great hardship to close your shutters and gaze for hours in expectation of a show that at best often misses its only note of warning, "Be ye ready." Bright autumn mornings see you quitting the counting-house for the coast or the pleasant country for recreation, or away for some successful speculation. Do you want to be rich? *Lay up* your treasures in heaven; it is so wealth is accumulated. Go you also to Christine's Royal Exchange. Carry in the godless persecuting scorners, who is to your soul a pricking briar in your daily life. May be, if not here, yet beyond the river, you may discover you are rich by that day's work in a jewel for the Redeemer's crown. Take there the little faith that looks down and trembles at what *may be*, and receive the reward that even the veriest babe in Christ is privileged to claim, who touches the hem of his garment—promises to sustain, and encouragement to plead for more. Lay down in that secret chamber the idol that is ensnaring your heart from him, whether that idol be your lawful calling, your external service for Him, or some beloved friend too closely cherished for peace. In his light you shall see light, for He has said it; and the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vine, shall be taken, and none shall spare them.

(To be continued.)

THE FINGER OF GOD.—JOHN VIII. 6.

‘ ever man spake like this man.’

He stooped, and wrote upon the ground;
No word the silence breaks;
Quick-heaving breasts and clouded brows
Proclaim that conscience wakes;
Men feel that God Himself is there,
Beneath whose sight the soul lies bare.

We know not what that finger traced
To meet each downcast eye,
What long-forgotten sins arise
In slumbering memory;
In darkness veiled—to men unknown;
But seen by God, by God alone.

He reads their thoughts, deceitful all;
Clear to his sight they shine:
Lust, av’rice, murder, serpent’s guile,
And last, their dark design.
He bids the sinless cast the stone;
And lo, they go out, one by one.

He stooped and wrote! Oh, tender still
To them his pure eyes scanned.
Each reads the mystic sign aright;
None else may understand.
The silent witness on the ground
Tells not the tale to ears around.

Oh, thou sad woman bowed in shame,
Shalt thou e’er rise again?
Behold the helpless stands before
The righteous Judge of men!
And now—thy last accuser gone—
The sinless One may cast the stone.

And doth He cast it? Lifting up
Himself, He gazed around.
Alone with Jesus! Leave her there;
She hath the Refuge found.
Her life, her guilty life, is o’er;
He bids her go, and sin no more.

Thus to the sinner speaks He still,
 Thus doth He speak to me,
 "From the dark thralldom of thy sin
 I come to set thee free."
 Saviour and sinner, stand alone;
 Oh! let the Sinless cast the stone.

Not for dread condemnation here
 Hath Christ this dark world trod;
 The Holy Saviour, perfect Man,
 The spotless Lamb of God,
 Came but a pardon free to give,
 And bid the weeping sinner live.

O loving, tender, Son of God!
 More light and life be mine;
 Teach me Thy finger, Lord, to trace
 In every mystic sign,
 Writ on Thy spangled heavens above,
 And earth's dark pages, "God is love."

Lo! when my secret sins arise
 With fierce confounding might,
 And Satan, with malicious rage,
 Darkens my day to night,
 Shall my accuser then be found?
 Nay, grace, Thy grace, shall more abound.

Yea, let me be alone with Thee,
 That Thou my soul may'st scan;
 Better the chast'ning hand of God
 Than tend'rest love of man.
 Thy blood shall then my soul restore,
 And bid me go and sin no more.

A. S.

THE CROSS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

GIDEON.

ISRAEL had sinned against the Lord, wherefore He delivered them into the hands of their enemies, and the Amalekites and Midianites and the children of the East came up with their cattle and tents like grasshoppers,

and destroyed the increase of the earth till thou come unto Gaza (which is the last town in the S. W. of Palestine, on the frontier towards Egypt), and left no sustenance for Israel, neither for sheep, nor ox, nor ass. Then Israel cried unto the Lord, and He sent them a prophet, who, like John the Baptist, in later days brought their sin to remembrance: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt and brought you forth out of the house of bondage... and said unto you, I am the Lord your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell. But ye have not obeyed my voice."

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, accosting him with, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." It did not seem a very valorous position, threshing corn in the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. But the hiding of God's face from his people for our sins makes cowards of us all. This angel was, doubtless, the Angel of the Covenant; Jehovah-Jesus, for the narrative proceeds, "The Lord looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt deliver Israel from the Midianites. Have not I sent thee?" The might of Gideon was no prowess of his own, but "The Lord looked upon him," and "Have not I sent thee?" "Ho whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God," and there is an irresistible might in Him.

It was after seven years of Midianite oppression that the Lord raised up the son of Joash to deliver Israel. The period of seven years symbolically denotes a fulness of time. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman (made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law), that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Gideon was preceded, as we have noticed, by a prophet who testified of sin, and now Gideon is called out, though his thousand is the meanest in Manasseh, and he is the least in his father's house. *Manasseh* means *forgotten*. Both in

his forerunner and in himself, the history of Gideon unmistakably points onward to the Sent One of the Father. The house and lineage of David was forgotten. It had become like a stump of a tree, over which the grass had grown, and nothing but the root remained.

So entirely forgotten was the royal line, that the Son of David was born among the beasts. And although He was the Firstborn of Mary, and the only-begotten Son of God, yet was He least in his father's house, whether as regards his earthly father or his Heavenly. For He said, "I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children;" and the evangelist testifies that "neither did his brethren believe in Him." So, also, as to his heavenly relationship: "He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant;" "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor;" and "was made a little lower than the angels, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man."

But there is this marked difference between Gideon and Gideon's Lord, that, while the creature, looking at his low estate, asks, "Wherewith shall I save Israel?" the Saviour, even in his childhood, manifests his glory by asking, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" and when He had in his baptism begun to fulfil all righteousness by making Himself answerable for the people's sins, speaks of Himself as "the Son of Man who is in heaven."

Gideon's work began by his overthrowing Baal's altar, and building an altar to the Lord. One of the earliest acts of Christ's ministry was to make a scourge of small cords and drive out the money-changers and them that sold oxen and sheep and doves, commanding them to "take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandize." But here also we discern the divine superiority of the Master; for while Gideon wrought by night, aided by ten men of his servants, Jesus overthrew the tables and poured out the

changers' money unaided, in the open day, using an instrument which would have been contemptible in any other hand than that of God manifest in the flesh.

The men of the city said to Joash, "Bring out thy son that he may die, because he hath cast down the altar of Baal." The world slew Jesus because He testified that the works thereof are evil.

But in all the history of Gideon there is nothing more remarkable than the sign which he asks of God, to certify him that He would save Israel by his hand, as He had said. We might have thought that, having seen the fire ascend out of the rock at the touch of the angel's rod, consuming the flesh and the unleavened cakes which Gideon had set before him; having then received courage to overthrow Baal's altar; and further, the Spirit having clothed him so that at the sound of his trumpet Abiezer was gathered after him, and Asher, Zebulun, Naphtali came up to meet him—we might well have thought that Gideon would have required no further sign. But, in spite of all, he is a timid trembler still. Had the angel mistaken his man when he addressed him, "Thou mighty man of valour"? There is a useful lesson for us here: "For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; *that no flesh should glory in his presence.*"

And here is another of the ways of God: the very unbelief of Gideon affords the Holy Ghost an opportunity for an infinitely blessed revelation of Him of whom He loves to testify. Unbelief asked a sign, but the manner of the sign was surely suggested by God Himself. If the dew should be on the fleece only, and all the earth around be dry, then should Gideon know that God would save Israel by his hand.

The dew is the type of blessing and favour from above. "The king's favour is as dew upon the grass." Job describes his condition in the months past when God preserved him, by the same figure: "The dew lay all night upon my branch." The Lord said unto David's Lord, when He raised Him from the dead, "Sit thou on my right hand," and expressed his complacent love towards Him by adding, "Thou hast the dew of thy youth"—a sentiment which the Beloved Son had anticipated before He suffered: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

There was a time when upon the Lamb of God (fitly represented by Gideon's fleece) the dew of the King's favour manifestly rested, while it was dry upon all the earth beside. "When all the people had been baptized, Jesus also, being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." On Him alone could that dew fall. The waters of the river of judgment had gone over the heads of all the people—a world of sinners self-condemned. Then Jesus was baptized—He also confessed sin—the sin of men. John cried, "Behold the Lamb of God, which beareth away the sin of the world!" and God replied from heaven, while the descending Dove accredited the testimony, "My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." An abundant dew—a bowl *full* of water—"I am *well* pleased," "He giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him."

On none beside could the dew rest. The whole world lay in the wicked one. All else but Him were like the mountains of Gilboa, of which David sung in his dirge over Saul, "Let there be no dew upon you!" or like Ahab, for whose sins the dew of heaven was restrained. But it was a glorious sign that Israel should be saved by the hand of the man Christ Jesus, as God had said, when the dew

thus lay on the fleece only and it was dry upon all the earth beside.

But even this is not enough, and the truth of Jehovah must be tested by a sign the reverse of the foregoing one. "Let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew." How little did Gideon understand the mystic meaning of the sign thus put into his heart to ask. How dark and fearful was the true fulfilment of the sign. Heaven had been opened when the dew descended upon the Lamb of God—now must the heaven be closed to Him. In order that there may be dew upon all the earth beside, there must be no dew upon the fleece. That the favour of God may rest upon the sinful race, the cry, "My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" must be wrung from the heart of the Beloved Son. That "grace may reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord," Jehovah must bruise Him, and put Him to grief, and make his soul an offering for sin. Did God refuse Gideon his second sign? Nay: "God did so that night; for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground."

Oh, my soul, draw near to see this great sight. Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place is holy. Glory to Jesus, when forsaken of God, He rolled Himself upon Him, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," and the Judge of all the earth, who would not suffer his Holy One to see corruption, has by his mighty power raised Him again from the dead—and us in Him. And now for evermore the dew is upon the fleece and on all the earth beside; all Israel is saved by Gideon's Lord, "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." M.

IT IS THE LORD.

It is the Lord ! behold Him now !
 What glory crowns his royal brow ;
 The thorns, the purple, and the gore,
 Shall grieve the Prince of Life no more.

It is the Lord ! my next of kin !
 Who by Himself once purged my sin ;
 But, now exalted, speaks from heaven
 Of sin and trespass all forgiven.

It is the Lord ! I know his voice !
 He tells me of his ancient choice ;
 And by his endless life above,
 Confirms his rich undying love.

It is the Lord ! He bids me hide
 Within the cleft of his dear side ;
 And there, in every storm of guilt,
 To plead the cleansing blood He spilt.

It is the Lord ! He'll gently lead,
 And show me where his flock doth feed,
 By waters still, in pastures green,
 Where all his grace and truth are seen.

It is the Lord ! Come, saints, arise !
 He calls you home above the skies.
 What rest with his can be compared ?
 The Father's house, so long prepared.

It is the Lord ! We cannot fail !
 His death and priesthood must prevail.
 Within the veil, a sure record,
 He shows his side, IT IS THE LORD !

CHARLES F. CREWES.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

THE Book of Psalms has been called "Fragments from the history of Redemption." This is just. They are not the orderly parts of a narrative, or of an argument, or even of a poem. They are but fragments, and scattered also here and there. Still, however, there is to be discovered something of the method even in the scattering. It is not altogether wild disorder; and the apostle, in naming one psalm as the second, witnesses that there is something of order in the book, known to the Holy Ghost.

But there should be holy care in the soul to gather up these fragments and to put them together with a cautious hand, and to walk over the ground where they are lying with unshod feet. Surely we should esteem it "holy ground," as Jesus is there in his sorrows and in his joys. The strings of David's harp are the strings of Christ's heart, and when they are touched we should be still. There should be something of the deep silence of those who listen to distant music, for the melodies of that heart are far enough away from this coarse and noisy world.

J. C. B.

FAITH IN CHRIST, THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

EVEN when we "tremble at judgment to come," a corrupt dread of "righteousness and temperance" often prevails to make us "defer to a more convenient season" the commencement of the course which we feel commences with our acceptance of God's free justification of us in Christ; and this is among the most potent of the causes why we "will not come to Him that we might have life."

All who believe or understand the truth must see that it is distinctly declared to us, that to fit those who embrace God's offers of mercy for the blessings which He has prepared for them, it is essential that they be freed from the dominion of sin, and conformed to the image of their Redeemer. And they see, too, that in God's ordinary dealings this change of character is effected by a course of discipline, and they learn that upon this course they are entering when they become believers in Christ. All know that his word declares that without taking his yoke and burden upon us, denying ourselves daily, taking up the cross and following Him; renouncing the friendship of the world, which is enmity against God; turning in heart and affection, not from its vanity and vices merely, but at his call from its most allowed enjoyments; abandoning at his command everything dear to man's natural heart—wealth, and ease, and reputation—love, friendship, and kindred affections—we *cannot* be his disciples. They hear in the Bible reiterated warnings that in coming to Christ, this is the profession in which we are engaging:—That we are engaging in a warfare in which we must endure hardness as his soldiers, that God scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, and that it is only through much tribulation that we can enter into the kingdom of God, if we be indeed followers of Him who entered not into his reward, but first, He suffered. Is there nothing formidable in the prospect of such a course? I do not ask, Do all men desire this kind of happiness? But do they desire any kind of happiness which is to be bestowed in this way? I believe that the power which all confess to be essential to sustain us in such a course, is no less necessary to vanquish our repugnance to entering upon it.

Nor do I mean that men cease to desire to be reconciled to God from apprehending that this arduous course of obedience to his will is demanded of them, as the price or condition of that reconciliation. I do not suppose in the case any

such gross misconception of the true nature of the gospel, or any misconception of any kind. On the contrary, I suppose that they fully understand that they are pressed to be reconciled to God *now*; that they are *now* offered upon his part, pardon of all their offences and free acceptance in Christ as dear children; and that they know too, that to enable them to walk as becomes children, a power is engaged which can and will support them in this most arduous course. But I am sure that from this message thus understood, fallen man *naturally* recoils with an aversion just proportioned to the degree with which he understands it. And if this be the case—if it be that when this message of mercy is best understood, it is naturally most distasteful—there is plainly an obstacle to faith in the Redeemer which no degree of knowledge and no strength of conviction can of themselves overcome, which nothing but the power of God's Spirit can effectually subdue.—*Bishop O'Brien's Sermons on Faith.*

INTROVERTED PARALLELISM.

IN interesting case of introverted parallelism occurs in 2 Tim. ii. 1—6.

1. "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

3. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

The three following verses will be found to contain striking *illustrations* bearing upon the subjects which form the above exhortations. But this in introverted order.

4. (3.) "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

The pertinency of this illustration to the exhortation contained in verse 3 is self-evident.

5. (2.) "And if a man also strive for masteries (contend in the games), yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully."

May not the bearing of this illustration upon the exhortation of the second verse be of this kind? Be careful to commit to *faithful* men, those able to teach others, the truths which you have heard from me. To send forth as teachers those who are not such, may be the means of propagating *religion*, but not of saving souls. Religious exertion is but lost labour, if the laws of the kingdom be not observed. Just as it is in the games—a man is not crowned unless he strive lawfully, *i.e.*, according to the rules of the contest: so is it in the things of God. The necessity of the new birth, Christ the way, the truth, and the life; present salvation the gift of God, justification by faith, etc., etc.;—these are the laws of the Christian contest, which, if they be not proclaimed and conformed to, all hope of being crowned is gone.

What a sad picture does professing Christianity present of the consequence of neglecting this exhortation! Men who are not *faithful* have committed to them the task of teaching others; and how can they who have not themselves conformed to the rules of the contest, teach others to do so? Consequently, though there may be much teaching of *religion*, there is little of the cross of Christ; and if no cross, no crown.

The third illustration seems also to correspond to the first exhortation.

6. (1.) "The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits."

Before speaking to others about grace, be sure that you are "strong in" it yourself. Just as the working man must first eat *before he works*, so must you be strengthened by that grace and stand strong in that grace which is in Christ Jesus, before working for Him.

7. "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."

H. E. B.

THE LITTLE FOX; OR, BROKEN COMMUNION.—II.

A TRUE NARRATIVE OF THE DAYS OF WHITEFIELD.

“Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines.”

IT was not only to carry petitions to the King of Saints that Christine closed her doors. There are special needs of deeper, uninterrupted communion than is attained when there are many coming and going, and the soul has no leisure so much as to eat of the heavenly bread. It is sweet to feel a dear friend is at our side, whose guidance we can trust and whose wisdom is ours; to know the companion of our way is the risen Jesus! But there are times when we seek still closer fellowship, when we rejoice in the desert place that shuts out the multitude, and we can tell over to the ear of our Beloved, not only what we have done and what we have taught, but pour forth the ardent affection that burns within, and receive in return the fresh assurance of that love it would be disloyal to doubt. In this sweet, tender intimacy, deeper and more entire than is shared with the dearest earthly friend, lies the secret of the hidden manna of which the white stone is the pledge.

Satan beheld with malicious rage the fellowship of our first parents with their Creator, and watched to destroy it. The soul, born again from above, walking in communion with the Lord God, is no less an object of the malignant consideration of the crafty foe. In it he beholds a visible sign of the reconciling power of a Saviour's blood; for the peaceful self-possession which it imparts is a witness of the eternal stream from whence it flows, even though the lips are constrained to silence. Its brightness may be overclouded, but not for long; like the dove harassed by the hawk and beaten by the tempest, the soul will seek and find her refuge at last in the river Rock.

Satan was not likely to leave, in unmolested security, one

who lived to proclaim and exalt his Conqueror. We are not ignorant of the devices of the enemy, and yet how blind is the Lord's servant. But the Lord reigneth, and dangers have often driven us out of sinful self into the bosom of a sympathizing Saviour, to behold his work for us. We have to deal with a conquered foe, who cannot go beyond the limit of the permission granted; and he was used, in the outset of Christine's residence in her new home, to establish her by more clearly showing her that sin was not destroyed, but that the two natures were as antagonistic as ever, the old man bringing forth thorns and thistles, because he can bring forth nothing else.

We learn by the things we suffer, and I would show you the little fox that made inroads on the fair garden of one who walked with God. May-be Christine thought that in making her appearance among strangers she would aid her reception by her outward garb; perhaps lace and silk might have been as seductive to her as to some of her fair and wealthy sisters—outward adorning might have been to her soul the stronghold of the evil one. I know not, he did not tempt her with a gaudy gown, or a brooch of many colours. She would have turned away at once; the temptation came in the form of a new black silk mode, at that time a coveted article of female attire.

"What harm could there be in a black silk cloak?" inquired an indignant listener.

Wait. Visions of French lace followed the reception of the mode, and French lace at that time was a far rarer article of merchandize than in the present day, and was limited to few purchasers. Moreover, frequently this description of lace was costly, and sometimes the difficulties in the way of procuring it added to the desire of its possession. Be it as it may, the bait took.

The fruit shop prospered, and it continued to prosper—copper turned to silver, and silver to gold. Christine did not

go into debt, I know not if her hand was as open to give during this short season when the thorn and thistle were allowed to flourish—but her trade failed not. Perhaps she thought, like the sailors with Paul, because the south wind blew softly, that she had attained her purpose; and so she had; little anticipating the Euroclydon which should cause the hold to be lightened ere the vessel, ordained to a higher service, should drift away a wreck, and that the purpose of the Most High, to waft his servant into the destined haven, should be accomplished by a midnight storm.

The mode was in possession, but the mode was nothing without the lace. The opportunity was not lacking of procuring it on what appeared most advantageous terms, and the lace was added to the cloak. Saturday evening came. It was a time of leisure, and the busy fingers of the fruit merchant were employed in an unusual manner, arranging and stitching the lace trimming. She made sad blunders, but at last it was completed.

Doubtless there was the old nature's satisfaction over the old nature's work. Yet Christine was not content; for she began to argue in her mind concerning it. She had honestly earned the money, the lace had been acquired by her own industry—moreover, it was all the work of her own hands. How often have we to weep over the works of our own hands, and behold them broken.

The decision was made by the old Adam, and, therefore, in favour thereof, that the new acquisition was lawful. How far it was expedient, the child of God had yet more fully to learn.

Dear Christine! If you had but consulted your own Holy Counsellor, how much sorrow would have been averted from your path.

At this time she was able to join a congregation in a neighbouring hamlet, and when the Lord's-day came, arrayed in the cloak which had cost her so much pains and money,

the new comer set forth to the chapel. It was a sunny autumn morning; the changing leaves, and the robin's clear shrill song had at other times wakened in her heart some well-timed hymn or commentary from Holy Writ. Not so this day. Everything seemed changed and dull. The tall pines, with their fragrant breath, only seemed to cast a gloom upon her path. Earth was shorn of its beauty. The sunshine was nothing to her, a cloud was deepening upon her soul. It did not console her that she was arrayed in silk and lace; she lacked the garment of praise, and went on her way bowed in the spirit of heaviness.

She entered the place of prayer. "I felt," said Christine, "as if every eye was fixed upon me." The hymn rang from other lips—Christine was dumb, and whatever the exhortation might have been, she gathered nothing from it. The neighbours regarded the new comer as she turned homeward; but evident as the glance of admiration was from those near to her, it brought anything but satisfaction to her heart. One cloud after another rolled over her soul; life seemed a burden too heavy to be borne. Her Saviour's face was hidden—she was in darkness; and what that darkness is, let those estimate who alone know what it is to walk in fellowship with the Son of God, and who have learnt to dread the anguish of those hours when, through the unrepented sin, the careless walking, the wilful way, a cloud has hidden Him in whose countenance is life—when He has withdrawn Himself; when the careless sleeper seeks, but cannot find Him; when she calls, but He gives her no answer.

These were not only hours, but days of darkness, and then — the little shop was closed, the shutters were unremoved, the doors were locked. And the sorrowful woman sat alone and before Jesus. Oh, that day angels witnessed great transactions between a mourning soul and a gracious, forgiving Lord. She had asked, "Why is it thus with me?" for through the subtlety of the crafty foe, who is so blind as

the servant of the Lord? Step by step she was led back to the first incipient desire for the spoil that had troubled Israel. The thought, the time, the money spent upon it, the goodly lace, the satisfaction in its possession; and yet the Lord had said, "If ye seek Me, let these go their way." She wanted to cherish the little fox and the vine also. That day she abode in the valley of the shadow of death; but what was life to her without the favour of the King's countenance?

Night came, and her resolve was clearly taken. The dying embers of the grate were raked together, and the dried pine branches made a cheerful blaze. Then the pale-faced mourner was seen by the Unseen alone, beginning the true work of making in the desert a highway for the King. The same scissors that had been used to fashion the tempting possession were now called to the work of destruction, "the accursed thing" was about to be destroyed, and Israel to go forth again to conquer in the power of the Lord and in the strength of his joy.

The delicate fabric was laid upon the blazing wood piecemeal. If any marked the volume of blue smoke rising from the tall, old-fashioned chimney of the stranger's dwelling, they would not have suspected the strange fuel within which was feeding the flames, nor imagine that it arose from a pyre formed of the very object which, perhaps, even at that time, excited their admiration or envy.

There was a pleasure to Christine as she watched the lace with its graceful design spread out, its golden thread of fire, and then sink into a heap of grey ashes. The fire burned briskly as if it loved to make short work of it; and the work is done, lace and cloak consumed, and the flame expires into a faint, flickering spark. All is dark without, but light has dawned within. The blood of the Crucified heals the weary, wandering heart, and back on the bosom of a loving Saviour the weeping woman with tongue unloosed

tells forth her grief that anything should transfix her soul's desire or win her from the sole contemplation of her Beloved. Oh, blessed, sacred hour of renewed favour!

That hour's secret communion was another round in the golden ladder for the child of God. She is sent forth anew, like Peter of old, more deeply humbled by the glance of love from the Lord he had denied than by the harshest judgment his fellow-sinners could pronounce upon him; *he* went forth to strengthen his brethren, and Christine, stronger and humbled from a deeper knowledge of the love which had much forgiven, went forth from that day on the mission of her life, more devoted and rejoicing, pointing others to her own source of strength—unbroken communion with a loving, sympathizing Saviour, in whose light the snares of the enemy are seen, and in whose strength was her safety.

"Burnt the lace!" exclaimed indignantly one to whom I recited these facts. "What folly! it might have been sold, and the money given to the poor." So aforetime said the spectators of the costly anointing: "To what purpose is this waste?" Not so the Lord! "by Him actions are weighed." "Ye have the poor always with you, but *Me* ye have not always;" and Christine had learnt the deep meaning of those words with those who have wept at the feet of Jesus.

"Much forgiven loveth much." We cannot be said to be stronger for having fallen into sin; but we are stronger in every new view of a Saviour's righteousness, in testimony with his faithfulness.

And a soul is never more careful and humbled than when, in rejoicing thankfulness, it is feeling the renewed efficacy of the Saviour's blood. Then it can testify, in lifegiving power, to him that is afar off and to him that is near, that our rest is in a perfect Offering, in whom no unrighteousness dwelleth, and who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

For Christine to walk more softly, to speak more

lovingly, to be more earnest for others, and, in a word, increasingly sensitive to every passing cloud lest it marred her realized communion with the Lord, was the result of the little fox taken.

(To be concluded in our next.)

"AFTER THESE THINGS;"

OR, THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN
RELATION TO THE FINAL TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL.

By REV. R. HAMILTON, FITZROY, AUSTRALIA.

THE expression, "final triumphs of the gospel," is one of a very comprehensive character. I have therefore great difficulty in knowing how to condense it within reasonable limits. This difficulty is all the greater because the expression is generally used in my judgment in a partial and restricted sense. There is another difficulty which I have to encounter, arising from the different opinions entertained in regard to the means by which the expected triumphs of the gospel are to be achieved. It may be proper at once to explain, in regard to the former difficulty, that I hold the "triumphs of the gospel" to embrace not only the millennial church on earth, but what I may call the millennial church in heaven. In regard to the difficulty affecting the means by which the universal reign of Christ over the nations shall be established, the general sentiment is that the existing means—consisting of the Word preached and circulated, and the Holy Spirit sent down copiously from heaven—is not only adequate, but is all that is necessary to effect the blessed result; whereas the view I hold is that while the gospel in the hand of the Spirit of God is fit, in a sense, to regenerate and convert the whole world, yet that there are other means of a supernatural character predicted, and that there are agencies of an extraordinary description essential

to be employed for introducing millennial blessedness. On account of this diversity of opinion, I must frequently appeal to Scripture.

I.—*Let me invite your attention to the twofold aspect of the church in millennial times.*

THE EARTHLY MILLENNIUM.

First.—The millennium on earth. On this point there is no dispute. That the truths of the everlasting gospel are destined sooner or later to triumph throughout the world, is, I presume, universally admitted. Sin is not always to prevail. The dominion of darkness is to be utterly overthrown. Iniquity, for shame, shall hide its face. Righteousness shall flow down the streets like a river. The beautiful picture of the prophet in regard to these joyous times shall be found to be one that is not overdrawn. "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them; and the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." All forms of idolatry and superstition shall be swept away, and unity of mind and heart shall characterise the whole race of man in the reverence and homage rendered to the living and true God. Wars shall cease to the ends of the earth. The nations of mankind shall be ranged under the banner of the Prince of Peace. The kingdoms of the world shall be the one kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. Instead of corrupt, unprincipled, and ungodly men occupying places of trust, of rank, and of power, "the kingdom, dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall

be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." The earth shall be one vast theocracy. The consummation of millennial purity and peace shall manifest itself in the complete transformation of all things. What we have been familiar with for six thousand years in the religious and social state of mankind shall pass away, and a new and glorious condition in respect both to divine worship and to political arrangements shall be established. The moral darkness, intellectual perversion, and wide-spread and long-continued subjugation of the masses to despotic rule, shall be exchanged for spiritual light, paradisiacal purity, and universal liberty and joy. The heavenly element, under the wise and enlightened government of Christ Jesus, shall greatly predominate in all human affairs. "Holiness unto the Lord" shall be inscribed upon the very bells of the horses; "yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts." The whole creation, which has groaned and travailed in pain together until now, shall be "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

THE HEAVENLY MILLENNIUM.

Second.—The millennial church in heaven. In order to explanation here, it is necessary to take into account the dominion of the great antagonist of God and man, who is styled "the prince of the power of the air," as if the atmospheric heavens were the seat of his rebellious empire, and as if these heavens furnished a commanding eminence, whence he could direct the fiendish legions that are under his control in their relentless war against the interests of our race. Now this prince of darkness shall be dethroned. The hosts of the devil shall be driven forth from their fortress, and be put under effectual restraint. The mighty potentate of hell shall be vanquished, expelled as a usurper from his throne, and punished in his dungeon of darkness and death. "I saw

an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled." In addition to the renovated earth, with its blessed inhabitants, we have the renovated heavens. Hence the magnificent image of a "new heaven and a new earth" is represented in Scripture as the grand climax of the predicted reformation of all things. It is impossible to look prayerfully to the descriptions that are furnished in the Word of God of the glories of the new dispensation, without being impressed by the fact that the heavenly, the immortal, and the divine, largely predominate in the coming economy. I may not be able to command entire unanimity of opinion with myself on this point. But I bespeak your candid consideration of what I advance. I shall endeavour as far as possible to avoid the controversial style, remembering that the subject is too solemn and overwhelming in its bearings to admit of disputation for the sake of personal gratification.

ANGELS AND MEN NOW DWELLING IN ONE KINGDOM.

The heavens and earth are the two great spheres of rational life and activity, with which man's interests for time and eternity are at present bound up. The one is the abode of mortal, and the other of immortal creatures; the one is the residence of human, the other of angelic beings; the one is the habitation of men in the flesh, righteous and wicked, and the other the sphere in which angels, good and evil, move: the one class of spiritual beings corrupting, enslaving, and destroying the children of men, the other assisting to liberate and save them. The wicked spirits and the wicked of the human family form two distinct classes of

beings, identified in character and destiny, belonging to the same dark kingdom, yet occupying two departments, separate from each other, in the kingdom—the upper department not visible to the lower—the two closely and intimately allied and exerting a mighty influence the one upon the other.

NEW HEAVENS.

Under the new economy, while the earth is renewed, the heavens also are cleansed, and the glorious reign of Christ would appear to embrace both spheres of being, and to shed its lustre over the whole. While the wicked on earth are supplanted by a race of righteous and holy persons, so the heavens which are now the abode of apostate angels shall become the mansion of bright and holy and happy intelligences. In this matter our appeal of course must be to the divine oracle—to the law and the testimony. Whether the new heavens shall be the residence of intelligent beings at all, and if so, what class of intelligences shall be the favoured creatures, must depend altogether on what saith the Scripture. Certainly there can be no presumptive evidence adduced against the prospect of such an arrangement. On the contrary, the presumption, previous to direct inquiry at Scripture, is all in favour of the supposition that the purified heavens shall be the seat of blessed life, holy influence, lofty dignity, and enrapturing joy. The expulsion of demons from a cruel dominion of sixty centuries must be no ordinary achievement: and is it to be supposed that the seat of their power is to be thenceforth a void, a desolation, a lifeless waste, a realm of silence? Is it not far more consistent to suppose the victors raising their shout of triumph, and keeping possession, as Joshua did the conquered land of Canaan, that it might be inhabited by God's covenanted hosts, and be consecrated to the service and honour of the great King of the heavenly country? On the supposition that the heavens are to be inhabited by a race of

immortal beings enjoying infinite honour and bliss, and exercising dominion of a peaceful, beneficent, and loving character over the inhabitants of the earth, who are in their mortal state, but are in the enjoyment of millennial happiness, there would be nothing incongruous, nothing repugnant to wise and holy arrangements. So far from this, it would be a similar state of things precisely to what has been in existence since the beginning of the world, with the exception that the element of evil is purged away, if not perfectly and for ever from the earth, at all events absolutely from the heavens.

NEW HEAVENS INHABITED.

My position then is, that the Scriptures do teach that the new heavens of the millennial era shall be the abode of the Lord Jesus in his divine majesty and glory, and of his redeemed people of all past generations raised from the dead, clothed with immortality, and brought into the possession of the promised inheritance—the inheritance that is "incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

In accordance with this affirmation, we find the sacred writers constantly blending or closely connecting a glorious state of heavenly influence and divine manifestation with the delightful scenes of a regenerated world. Immediately after the overthrow of Babylon, the destruction of the beasts, or despotic powers of the earth, and the imprisonment of Satan, what is the first scene which John in holy vision beholds? It is the new heaven and the new earth. And forthwith he sees the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And then he heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither shall there be any more pain."

Surely it does not require reasoning to prove that this cannot be the millennial church on earth, for she has no tears to wipe away; but the millennial church in heaven, raised from corruption to immortality, and brought to dwell in immediate connection with the earthly department of the kingdom of Christ. And why should there be anything strange or startling in this representation? Just as the person of Jesus involves a union of the highest nature, the Divine with the nature of man, which in consequence of sin ranks in order with that of devils; so the development of the scheme of redemption under the blissful reign of the Messiah produces a marvellous junction of the heavenly and sublime with the human and the lowly. The bonds of connection, under the dominion of David's Son and David's Lord, between God and man, between heaven and earth, are drawn close together and united in harmony and joy. How appropriate the emblem of marriage to express the happy consummation of a loving union, first, between Christ and his church; and second, between heaven and earth!

THE HOLY OF HOLIES.

The heavens shall constitute the highest department of the new and blessed kingdom of Christ. The chief glory of the new dispensation shall be the manifested presence of the King of saints in the midst of his saved church. Now "the ransomed of the Lord shall have come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, and they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

We are furnished, then, with an image of surpassing brilliancy to express the grandeur and joy of the new state of things. It is that of a great and heavenly city, filled with the glory of God. "And her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal, and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are

the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. The twelve gates are twelve pearls, and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." The sacred and solemn character of this highest part of the Saviour's new kingdom is altogether indescribable. There was no temple seen by the apostle in this holy city, the great metropolis of the millennial empire; and the reason assigned discloses at once the infinite magnificence and glory of the place—"For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." After this it does not surprise us to be told that the scene presented is one of inconceivable splendour: "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

THE HOLY AND MOST HOLY UNITED.

That this bright celestial state, with its indescribable glory, is inseparably and closely connected with, and forms part of the millennial economy, seems clearly indicated also by the declaration—"The nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it;" placing it beyond a doubt that there are two states in the coming dispensation—a higher, and a highest—a more glorious, and a most glorious. There will be the holy place, and the holy of holies—the inner sanctuary and the outer—the immediate residence of the King, in the lustre of his divine excellence, with his redeemed host that have come out of great tribulation, and the abode of men in the flesh, in the high enjoyment of Paradise restored. In other words, the new heavens—the mansion of the Bridegroom and his bride, and the earth the habitation of the emancipated kingdoms—heaven and earth united in glorious harmony, fulfilling the type of the twofold division of the temple and the tabernacle of old—the one embracing the church of Christ raised from mortality in the

dust, and dwelling in incorruption with her glorified Lord, amid the unbounded splendours of the Saviour's imperial presence; and the other comprehending the nations that are saved from the fiery judgments which consume the tares and purify all things—comprehending the restored Jews and the Gentile remnant—all who are spared to inhabit the world in its renovated form, with the curse removed, and all nature adorned in bridal loveliness and joy—the two departments closely joined, yet a veil between the two,—an endearing connection, but no unnatural mingling of the mortal with the immortal, or the divine with the human. So we find again that the apostle says, “And the gates of it”—that is, of the glorious palace of Christ and his risen saints—“shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there.” “And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it,”—showing that the inhabitants of the earth shall have such proximity to the blessed abode of Jesus and his people, that they shall bring their worship, and honour, and glory, and offer them in humble homage at the throne of Him who “reigns in Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.”

(To be continued.)

PIERCE NO MORE.

PIERCE no more the Saviour's brow!
Ye who sin do pierce Him now.
Twine no more the crown of thorn;
Oh, that marr'd and wounded form!
See these wounds in hands and feet!
Oh, what sins and sorrows meet
On that thorn-crown'd bleeding brow!
Wound no more the Saviour now!
Fount of life, his bleeding side!
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide!
Gate of heaven, these wounds to me—
Jesus—on the shameful tree.

Kilmarnock.

M. P. AIRD.

"UNBLAMEABLE IN HOLINESS."—1 THESS. iii. 13.

NOW much we hear of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; so much, that we might suppose there must be great longing in the Church for his appearing. Perhaps this is really the case, and that the Lord is beginning to make us "increase and abound in love towards one another and towards all, to the end He may establish our hearts in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

That our hearts are *not* thus established is too evident; when they become so, we shall know that the time is arrived, for the bride will have "made herself ready;" for to her it is granted that she shall be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

For the purpose of delaying this fruition of our hopes, the blessed signal of his own imprisonment, Satan is constantly throwing some fresh apple of discord among the Lord's people. One frequent plan is to suggest to the natural pride of man the examination of some deep mystery which has really no bearing on the faith or walk of believers, and which he knows can never be decided here, but is ordained by infinite love to be hidden from man's present ken, for "the secret things belong unto God."

At other times our subtle foe tempts the Lord's people to quarrel on points concerning which an impartial observer discerns that they really differ only in terms. Thus, by too critical an examination of the mode by which God bestows his spiritual blessings, they are turned away from happily enjoying and feeding on the blessings themselves.

Another of Satan's wiles is to lead Christians to consider each other as opponents because gifted for work of a different description from that to which they themselves are called,

forgetting the apostle's question, "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?" 1 Cor. xii. 17.

That which is true concerning every individual is the case with the church in her corporate state. We can only be preserved from perplexities and entanglements by constant "watching unto prayer." Never do we find ourselves in an intricate net of apparently contending duties, without being able to trace back our dilemma to some act of disobedience for which we have not "judged ourselves," and, consequently, must be "judged of the Lord." Thus it is with the church of God. She has often meddled presumptuously with things too high for her, and frequently brought the natural intellect instead of the Spirit to the study of the Word. Opposing believers have dogmatized and anathematized, deluded by Satan into the idea that by yielding even common Christian courtesy to those who have taken the other side of the argument, they shall secede from their self-assumed office of champions of Jehovah's glory. Both sides suppose the wrath of man shall work the righteousness of God, though his Word has solemnly declared the contrary to be the case. Thus leanness enters into the souls of the disputants and their partisans, who in every society sound forth the praises of their favourite preacher or author, rather than of the Lord Christ, and make it evident that deep humiliation, perhaps persecution, is needed to bring the family of the Redeemed into subjection to the Spirit.

I will just observe that many weak believers are tempted to turn a deaf ear altogether to the hope of our Lord's appearing, excusing themselves by asserting, not without some appearance of reason, that did those who exhort to this blessed expectation really believe it, they would surely evidence more of this holy temper of universal love to all the Lord's people to which they are so continually exhorted by our Lord and his apostles, however they might differ in opinion

on the exact time and detail signified by prophecy of the day of glory.

Our Lord has told us that the kingdom of God is within us; and beside declaring plainly that our hearts are to be "established in holiness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints," Paul also prays that the Thessalonian believers may be sanctified wholly, and that their "whole spirit, soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," adding the joyful declaration, "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." There can be no doubt that the great characteristic of the kingdom of God within us is the unbroken fellowship with the Father and the Son, maintained through the never-failing advocacy of our glorious High Priest; in other words, our constant walk in the Spirit securing us, according to the promise, from fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. It is evident, therefore, that if we cannot converse with those whose opinions differ from our own, without yielding to variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, all which are comprised in the black list of "lusts of the flesh," we must learn to "stay at home till our beards are grown." In other words, we must retire into solitude, confessing our sin, and seek more grace, more love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, for if we "live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit, not being desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another." (Gal. v. 20, to end.)

Until we can meet in "the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind," the church of God is of necessity divided into various sections, for where would be the use of coming together out of the Spirit—in other words, for the purpose of quarrelling, or (in order to avoid doing so) to be constrained to keep back many most important points of Scriptural truth. Therefore, instead of seeking to bring believers together in outward appearance only, to return in two or three days to

their usual bickerings, it seems to me far more of the Spirit to yield to the past and present necessity of having the church enclosed in a multitude of separate compartments, and to pray individually, or in little knots (whoever can agree to do so), imploring our pitying Lord to vouchsafe us more of the sovereign uniting grace of God.

If I may venture upon such an illustration, would not the wise parent of a family of squabbling children imprison them in various distant rooms, that he might separately convince them of their fault, and chasten them by thus withholding what might have been family sociality, and general comfort and benefit? Undoubtedly, a peace which is only obtained by separation differs little from an armed neutrality, and is only better than open warfare, yet such must be the case until Christians learn that, though the fact that knowledge is increased, is one sign of the approaching end of the dispensation, yet that to increase and abound in love one towards another, would be a far stronger sign.

H. P.

STREAMS IN THE DESERT.

"Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert."—ISAIAH xxxv. 6.

In the lonely wilderness,
And solitary place,
Jesus, make them glad, and bless
With thy refreshing grace!
Bid thy banished ones rejoice;
Hidden streams of life disclose;
Let the deserts hear thy voice
And blossom as the rose!

On the heights of Lebanon,
Oh, let thy presence shine!
Carmel's mount and Sharon own
The excellence divine.

Streams in the Desert.

Let the heathen tribes behold,
And Jesus hail, with one accord;
Unto all mankind unfold
The glory of the Lord!

Let the weakened hands be strong;
Confirm the feeble knees!
Oh, ye dumb, break forth in song;
Ye troubled hearts, find ease!
End the years of parching drought,
And streams into the desert send;
Oh, ye water-springs, gush out!
Ye heavenly rains, descend!

Make the parched ground a pool,
And cheer the thirsty land;
Let the nations own thy rule,
And bow to thy command!
Let the cross, uplifted high,
Be by every nation owned,
Jesus, who for all didst die,
In every heart enthroned.

Let the ransomed of the Lord
With songs to Zion come;
Now be Paradise restored
In every heart and home.
Joy and gladness fill the earth :
Hasten! bright millennial day!
Everlasting songs of mirth,
And sorrow fled away !

Walking in the King's highway
Of holiness and love;
Then the church on earth shall pray
And praise like that above;
Until Jesus rends the sky,
And comes to claim his spotless Bride;
Lift her to his throne on high,
And seat her at his side.

Mountfield, Faversham.

BENJ. GOUGH.

“AFTER THESE THINGS;”

OR, THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN
RELATION TO THE FINAL TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL.

BY REV. R. HAMILTON, FITZROY, MELBOURNE.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35.

THE MEANS *by which the kingdom of our Lord is to be established.*

A question of momentous interest affecting the church of Christ in her present probationary state is in regard to the manner in which the millennial reign of Christ shall be introduced. What are the means by which the transition shall be accomplished from the present depression to the predicted glory?

SUPERNATURAL MEANS.

It will at once be seen, from what has been advanced, that while existing means, which are used by the church in her present depressed condition, are serving a most important purpose, notwithstanding her chequered character and limited influence, in preparing for the grand development that is approaching; and while they are fitted to effect a far greater improvement in the spiritual condition of mankind than has ever been realized, were they more faithfully and prayerfully employed; and while they are uniformly found to be successful in changing the nature and condition of men when they are used as divinely directed; yet that these means of grace are not in their nature calculated to do what is necessary in order to bring in millennial glory in all its fulness.

Apart from the existing instrumentality for the conversion and salvation of souls, let me notice some of those special means which seem to be necessary for achieving the great transformation, means which appear also to be divinely

appointed. While the Word and Spirit are essential to the preparation of those who are the heirs of glory in the new heavens, it seems to be nothing less than the supernatural interposition of God, in the exercise of his infinite wisdom and almighty power, that is required to overthrow the kingdom of darkness, and completely to establish that kingdom which is distinguished by righteousness, peace, and heavenly truth and joy. This extraordinary revolution shall evidently be effected in a manner summary and unexpected, as well as marvellous.

Upon reflection, we think, it must appear reasonable that divine power should be brought into requisition in the case, and that this power should be put forth with alarming energy and irresistible success. Think of the powers of hell as manifested in human affairs during the past. They have been intertwined with great political dynasties, and consequently the destruction of the former involves the annihilation of the latter. This is strikingly set forth by Daniel, who represents "a little stone, cut out without hands," striking the image of all ungodly dominion; and when the image is struck on the feet and toes, then the whole of the gigantic structure of secular and Satan-inspired thrones and empires falls to pieces and disappears, and is as effectually swept away as the dust of the summer threshing-floors. The iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold are broken to pieces together, and the stone that smites the image becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth.

What a revolution in the mighty kingdoms of earth! a revolution, too, effected in a manner sudden and abrupt! The dethroning of the god of this world, the apostate angel of darkness, and the utter subversion of despotisms, civil and ecclesiastical, that have been long established, and have been reared by a vast expenditure of blood and treasure, disappearing like a millstone cast into the sea! These despoticisms have been interwoven with the four great empires of history, the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman.

The last of the four, the most gigantic and terrible of the whole, embraces at this moment the greater part of the civilized world; but the entire number are at present on the stage, and ready to receive the crushing stroke of the preternatural little stone. What disaster awaits the seats of regal power that are based on iniquity, and linked in unhallowed union with Apollyon, the king of the bottomless pit! The judgment impending is inconceivably dreadful, far more so than any that has ever been inflicted in the history of man. It will be in some respects peculiar, and that peculiarity warrants the expectation of an unparalleled doom.

SATANIC DOMINION DESTROYED.

In the judgment on the antediluvian world there was the overthrow of all reigning powers on earth; but there was not the destruction of the dominion of evil and unseen intelligences. That was an overthrow of Satan's subjects in this world, but not a deadly infliction on the administration of the Wicked One himself as carried on among his apostate spiritual subjects in the region above the earth. All the other calamities sent upon earthly powers which history records have been of a similar character, involving simply a partial destruction of the dominion of the hosts of darkness. When Sodom and Gomorrah were burned, the great Spirit of Evil retained his seat of power in the heavens, and continued to exercise the same control as before upon the affairs of men, corrupting, debasing, destroying. When the battalions of Pharaoh were overwhelmed in the sea, it was the same. When the rebellious Israelites were slain, there was no difference. When Babylon was subdued by Persia, Persia by Greece, and Greece by Rome, it was still as of old. The throne of the devil's power in the aerial region above was unaffected, and accordingly corruption and wickedness were no sooner dead and buried than they rose again to life. Not only so, but when Christ Jesus rose from the dead a conqueror

of death and hell, and ascended to the right hand of God, leading captivity captive, and poured down his Holy Spirit on his disciples, and cast out demons from the hearts of men (as He has continued to do till now on behalf of all who come to Him), and has overturned the whole Jewish polity; still there has been no effectual blow struck at the spiritual powers which own the Dragon as their head. They have retained their seats of office; have had free access to the hearts of men; have perpetuated the debasement of mankind; have maintained on the earth an organized system of opposition to the authority of the God of grace.

But at the great crisis in the world's history that is hastening on, it is altogether different. Then these enslaving powers are effectually removed. They have no further access to the hearts of men, to pervert, corrupt, and pollute them. They have no opportunity to intermeddle with human affairs, and to organize plots and systems of ingeniously contrived hostility to God, and to the best interests of our race. Their dominion is taken away till the thousand years are fulfilled, and then it is exercised only for a temporary purpose, and for a limited though mysterious result. The glorious era, then, which is expected to be near, is one which will witness the triumphs of Christ's avenging power over all his enemies, human and angelic.

EARTHLY POWERS OVERTHROWN.

There is another image employed by the prophet which teaches the thorough destruction of the ungodly powers of earth. The different empires that should rise in the world from Daniel's time are represented by as many wild beasts. The last of the four, denoting the Roman empire, after devouring the whole earth, treading it down and breaking it in pieces, meets at length with a doom the nature of which it would not be easy to mistake. "I beheld," says the prophet, "till the beast was slain and his body destroyed, and given

to the burning flame." These expressions will not bear the interpretation of conversion, or of a slow and gradual change to the better. The beast is not subjected to treatment whereby it is tamed, subdued, and changed in its nature and character. No, it is put to death. This implies violence, overmastering power, overwhelming strokes of destruction. More than this; its doom seems indicated as one which is effected by fire. Furious and irresistible judgment is to descend on the great body of Roman dominion, embracing chiefly the nations of Europe and their dependencies, in so far as they are actuated by obstinate hostility to the God of salvation, and like the fiery flame seizing on a heap of combustible materials, rages uncontrolled till the burning mass speedily disappears. "The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy it unto the end." Terms like these exclude all notion of spiritual improvement effected by the ordinary means of conversion and salvation, and shut us up to the trembling expectation of avenging wrath. "The day of vengeance is in mine heart," is the language of God to the unbelieving nations of mankind, and whenever the vengeance is executed He proclaims the heart-inspiring truth, "The year of my redeemed is come."

III.—*Next let me notice the blessed RESULTS flowing to the human race from the establishment of Christ's universal reign.*

JOY FILLING HEAVEN AND EARTH.

Observe the announcements of joy both to heaven and earth consequent upon the inflictions of predicted wrath. Now Christ's new kingdom begins to manifest itself in its appropriate fulness and glory. Hence the enrapturing language of the prophet, "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be

destroyed." There is a twofold judgment, then a twofold victory. The heavens and the earth are the scenes of both. On earth all that is corrupt and wicked in man, both in public and in private life, shall be swept away. Whatever is perverting, debasing, and ruinous, both in church and state, both in government and people, both in politics and religion, shall be removed, while the principles of the gospel shall have unlimited ascendancy, and the laws of Christ shall be universally obeyed. Besides this, the apostate angels and the dominion they have exercised having been overthrown, then a new and glorious reign of heavenly powers shall be established in their room.

In accordance with this representation, it is worthy of observation how often in Scripture the heavens and the earth are joined together, not merely as in creation work when God made the heavens and the earth, but as having a strong moral connection, as united in spiritual interests, as the abodes of living inhabitants, and these inhabitants beings of different physical natures, but, under the same moral administration, and destined to share in the same enjoyments or in the same miseries through immortal ages. Moses in his prophetic song before his death, begins thus: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak, and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth," as if the destinies of the living intelligences in both spheres of being were concerned in his predictions of mercy and his forewarnings of judgment. Isaiah commences his prophecy in the same way, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth," as if he was delivering a message from God which affected the eternal interests of both angels and men. In Deborah's song of triumph over the enemies of Israel the prophetess says, "The earth trembled, and the heavens dropped." In a variety of prophetic psalms which have for their subject the future triumphs of Christ's truth and power, it is said, "Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice." Isaiah, in predicting the fall of Babylon and the coming of the day of the Lord's vengeance, says, "Therefore I will

shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts and in the day of his fierce anger," and then comes the glorious change. Haggai says in similar language, "I will shake the heavens and the earth, and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms." Jeremiah says, "I beheld the earth, and it was without form and void, and the heavens, and they had no light." The Saviour, too, after describing the tribulation that should come on the earth, and the darkness of the sun and moon and the falling of the stars, adds, "The powers of the heavens shall be shaken." Peter says, "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." And when this judgment-scene has passed away, the prophet says, "Behold I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind," and the New Testament writers respond in the same joyous strain, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

(To be continued.)

SONNET.

"Behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—REV. iii. 20.

But thou shalt stand no longer, gracious Lord,
 Above the strife of warring passions' din,
 I've heard thy voice, and haste to let Thee in,
 A place is waiting for Thee at my board.
 Ah, Thou hast stood without long dreary years;
 Stood in the scorching sun and biting frost,
 Whilst I thy purposes of love have crost,
 But cross no more—so say these sorrowing tears—
 Thou patient One, thus knocking at my door,
 Seeking admission to a heart like mine
 In all the strength of tenderness divine,
 Beseeching me to give my revels o'er.
 And find a place for Thee, my heavenly Guest,
 Where thou might'st sit and consecrate the feast.

C. E. N.

THE LITTLE FOX; OR, BROKEN COMMUNION.—**III.**
A TRUE NARRATIVE OF THE DAYS OF WHITEFIELD.

“Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines.”

THINK not that Christine was defeated because she had fallen into a snare of the enemy. The foe was conquered when Christ arose triumphant from the grave, and his people gather the spoil of his victory in His might “who ever liveth to make intercession for them.” “We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.” Christine knew that sin was not destroyed, but she had the promise that it should not have dominion over her, and she was aroused to increased watchfulness, lest by the subtle croak of the flesh, she should cease to discern the sweet voice of the turtle.

There is a proportionate growth in the soul when we have experimentally learnt by the things we have suffered that Christ Jesus has not only delivered our souls from death by his sacrifice on the cross, but also that He is able, moment by moment, in the strength which cometh from the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us, to deliver our feet from falling, that we may walk before Him in the land of the living.

No one in whom the grace of God dwelleth would for an instant doubt that Christine was a child of God, or suggest that a really devoted follower of the heavenly Master would not have found either pleasure or sin in the acquisition of so inconsiderable an object of womanly vanity. “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

The true test of an object, circumstance, or position, will be its effect on our fellowship with God. To a superficial observer, or to one not walking in the same light, such things may appear innocent or indifferent. Can anything be innocent which makes a citizen of the heavenly Canaan unfaith-

ful to his high calling, or lures him to waste the precious hours given him for his holy trading?

Every day reveals to us how the ingenious devices of Satan are employed in mingling worldly conformity with spiritual service. The snare is laid close to the narrow path, and will assuredly take the unwary foot, if it walk in the carnal security and wisdom of the world, and the soul will learn that though it is delivered from the dominion of the tyrant, it is not yet beyond his assaults.

The new man, born of God, cannot sin; the old Adam-nature is evil continually, nor will he cease lusting against the Spirit until the last enemy be overcome. The heel of the Man Christ Jesus is on the bruised head of the serpent-fiend, and those walking with the Lord can take no lower station. Heavenly food must nourish the young child of heaven, heavenly senses must be exercised to discern heavenly things, for Herod plotted ever against him. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, it cannot perish, but the evil one will not for that reason leave him in peace. There is a safe hiding place, the everlasting arms; there is a strong fortress, the felt presence of Jesus.

Christine grew more infirm as years went by, and the duties her humble merchandise entailed, became too arduous for her. The Lord was not unmindful of his servant, and none yet who have waited on Him have been confounded. He had prepared a home for her, a service in which her soul delighted, and hearts to love and cherish her.

A lady of wealth and position, brought to the knowledge of the truth in the last Revival, under the preacher whose labours had now closed in Georgia, was led "by the hand of our God," on a visit to the neighbourhood which had unconsciously received many a blessing from the stranger fruit merchant whom they had so churlishly entertained among them.

The Lord gave Christine great favour in the sight of the

friend He had raised up for her, and many were the hours passed in sweet communion together, the young disciple drinking in with delighted heart the deep and precious things of God, which the rejoicing Christine loved to spread before her. Tender was the friendship which sprang up between them, sympathy in mind and feeling daily endearing each brief meeting. The visit of the stranger-lady drew to a close; free of all other claims, she pleaded with Christine to accept, for her declining years, the care and affection of a daughter; and make her dwelling beneath her roof. The proposition was at first too startling to be entertained, the solitude of her own humble dwelling was brightened to Christine by the visits of the King and the blessed associations of years of unbroken fellowship, which lent precious memories to the little chambers; the freedom of her own home was indescribably dear to her. But Christine walked with God, and when she had learnt his will, she rejoiced to do it better than her own, and obedient to the word of the Lord she went forth again at the close of her earthly pilgrimage, ready to follow Him, the angel of whose presence went before her to assure her a safe resting-place.

Once more a stranger in a strange land, her end was as singular in the world's eyes, as her spiritual life had been. The inmates of many a mansion where Christ had entered, sought that chamber set apart for her use, which must have owned the prophet's blessing, and where, a fruit merchant still, Christine was the rejoicing bearer of grapes of Eshcol to the more noble of the land. Honoured and beloved with the love that comprehends, and the honour born of the love which receives Christ in his friend, her brief sojourn closed. And Christine was again called to go forth, not to strangers, but to the Friend and Companion of her daily life, to Him in whom her soul delighted, and in whose right hand are pleasures for evermore—to Him in whose presence is the fulness of joy—with Him for whom she watched—with Him with

whom she now waits, no longer a stranger among aliens, but the happy child at home with Jesus!

Of her early history and origin, I know nothing. She was evidently, in the best sense of the word, a gentlewoman; and as I have seen the refinement which the grace of God works in its possessors in a position still more humble, I can easily understand that the same power which fitted David for a throne, could supply all that was needed in the fruit merchant, for her blessed mission in her last earthly sphere.

Before the happy grape gatherer had been called to her last stranger-home, her then youthful friend had gone forth to her life's labours, and when I took from her own lips this simple history, I could not but trace something of the harvest of the devoted woman in the life of one who had been led by her example to the like *living* faith which was kept clear and bright by the realized fellowship which she enjoyed with a living Lord. Blessing and blessed, her love for souls never slackened, her desire for the glory of the Beloved never grew cold, the hope of his appearing never failed; until beneath the ravages of age, infirmity, and disease, the storm-beaten tent fell to pieces, and the freed soul fluttered forth to the crystal doorway to enjoy henceforth and for ever His presence without a cloud, who had led *her* fourscore years and seven by the right way to the city of habitation.

To the last she loved to speak to those who understood the deep meaning of Christine's unbroken peace, of the simple faith, the holy walking, the safe dwelling in the secret presence of the Most High, whose delights are with the sons of men.

And you to whom I speak, do you walk with God? I do not ask you, do you believe in the Son of God? My simple narrative can have no charm to win a worldling's ear. If fellowship with Jesus is dearer to you than any earthly tie of husband, or wife, or friend, then you have learnt that all the tribulation of the way is as nothing in comparison to the anguish of interrupted communion. You have learnt experi-

mentally how the Holy Ghost may be grieved, and the heavenly Guest can no longer come in and sup with you as of old time. Like the lonely Bride, you may have been seeking for Him in the Broadway and the city, and in dwelling on what He was once to your sin-sick soul, you have forgotten what He is now, the *same* Jesus! Oh! be not disheartened, if you are now as one that mourns. Your very grief tells how dear to you the light of that face that is hidden from your downcast eyes. You have the "secret of the stairs." Go to *Him*. Let Him "see thy countenance," though it is bathed in tears. Let Him "hear thy voice," broken though it may be with sighs. He comprehends the unuttered language of "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Listen for his voice. Read the letter of his love, sealed with his own blood, "I will never leave thee, never, never forsake thee."

Those who have wandered on the dark mountain know that it is not by the mere exercise of memory that they can realize the atoning Blood by which the conscience is purged and communion is restored. There is the confession of the sin, and the felt acknowledgment of what that sin has done, before the wounded soul experiences its efficacy. It is not by the intellectual knowledge of the old man, but by the child-like faith of the babe of heaven, that peace is restored. God has to deal with us as with children, and the wilful or careless departure from the Light in which alone we see light must be followed by the experience of the love that chideth, in the sweet lesson that there is forgiveness with the Father that He may be feared. The way of access is clear. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Did the crimson glory of the blood upon the horns of the altar, once sprinkled within the veil, around, and on the holy things, give peace to Israel's priest? and shall we, who have not only the glorious type, but the reality, forget that our great High Priest is the God of the living? In *Him* ye have peace; and what peace!

He cannot leave or forsake. But, as sin had power to blot out from Adam the omniscience of the Lord God, so we also, when walking in darkness, may be tempted to think of Him only as a Judge.

Oh, mourning soul who may have wandered from that sweet and blessed portion, return. Thou art in the cleft of the Rock! oh, use the secret of the stair. The mystical foot-washing is the secret of the saint's peace. Thus, and thus only can you be willing and obedient, and eat the good of the land. Being first partaker of the fair fruit yourself, you may give unto those that have never tasted, and scarce believe in its wondrous beauty. Living in the light you shall see light, and the little foxes shall be taken that spoil the vine, for our vines have tender grapes.

MY GARDEN-GROUND.

"My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies."—*CANT. vi. 2.*

God gave me a fair garden-ground
Of vernal glades and bowers,
A silver stream with gladsome voice,
And trees, and fruit, and flowers.
The brook ran rippling by the way
And made sweet music there,
The fairest vineyard of the south
Seemed never half so fair.

One visited my flowery field,
Of gracious speech was He,
As mother to her listening child,
Thus spake my Lord to me.
"I am the Husbandman, and thou
From Me this land doth hold,
More precious is the smallest blade
Than Ophir's purest gold.

"Work for me, work thy little hour,
For me, thy Friend, thy Lord;
Dread not the drought, fear not the cloud,
But cast thy seed abroad.

My Garden-ground.

Far on the breeze each wingéd germ
 May mock thine anxious gaze,
 Thou'lt find it in the fatherland
 The growth of many days.

"Raise thou the bruised and broken plants
 The storm may bend around,
 Shelter for me the tender vine
 Within thy garden-ground.
 Let not the lack of harvest fruit
 Thy heart's allegiance move,
 My hand deals forth the best for thee,
 And all is done in love.

"'Tis not for thee to judge the need
 Of watching, tears, and toil,
 A fairer garden waits thy plants
 Now in a foreign soil ;
 And see ! to cheer thy path awhile,
 This crystal brook shall run,
 Its voice shall chime in happy praise,
 With thine, my lonely one."

I answered, "Lord ! how good it is !
 How great thy mercies be,
 And I will keep this garden-ground,
 And tend it but for Thee.
All thine ! for ever ! Lord, all thine !
 The stream, the flowers, the fruit,
 Such love beams in thy gifts to me,
 My heart hath long been mute.

"Now, I can only say, "'Tis Thine !"
 Ask what Thou lovest best,
 And I will cull my first-ripe fruit,
 For Thou that fruit hast blessed."
 So day by day I worked, and sang,
 Tho' many a night I wept
 To see the blight, or weed arise,
 But still my watch I kept.

Brightest beside my purling brook
 My buds of promise grew ;
 I loved the sunshine on the wave,
 And the sparkling spray it threw.

I saw reflected in its face
Our April's changing sky,
The glory of the sunset eve,
And night's fair canopy.

No message came for fruit or flower;
But, as I passed along
One day, I missed the warbling brook
That cheered me with its song.
I cried, "Oh, anything but this—
Had'st Thou but chosen, Lord!
That brook had sweeter songs for me
Than any summer bird."

He chided not, that Husbandman,
But whispered (while I mourned),
"Only believe!" and then I thought
My little brook returned,
And soothed me with an angel tongue
And stilled my falling tear.
"Oh, dear one," thus it seemed to sing,
"Rejoice I am not here!

"My voice rings in thy future home,
And Christ doth love the strain.
Oh, never, never wish me back
'Mid earthly scenes again.
No summer heat can reach me here,
No winter's frost or snow,
And radiant in the light of life
My rippling wavelets flow.

"Not lost for thee the silver stream,
Not dumb my summer song;
Beyond the Jordan's wave it flows
Far fairer fields among,
Praising the love that marked the path
That once we blindly trod;
Thus we together still make glad
The city of our God."

So comforted, my sorrowing head
Bowed to the silence there;
But still I said, "No other brook
Was ever half so fair."

My Garden-ground.

But I will now but deeper drink
 From whence its source began;
 Deep from the rivers of thy love,
 Whence, Lord, my brooklet ran.

Still worked I in my garden ground,
 And autumn days drew nigh.
 And then the Husbandman returned.—
 He passed my ripe grapes by,
 He gathered not the pomegranate,
 Nor bent the green fig's bough;
 Sheltered amid the beds of spice
 His voice hath found me now.

Close at my side a lily grew,
 A fragile bud, so small;
 None marked it, but I cherished it
 The fondest of them all!
 He paused beside my flower awhile,
 My heart grew faint and cold;
 I cried, "Lord, wait, that little one
 Will fairer hues unfold."

He heeded not. He plucked my bud,
 And smiling on me, said,
 "I planted it, and it shall bloom
 In Paradise instead;
 This clime is all too cold for it;
 But there 'mid Eden's bowers
 Thy lily-bud will grow to be
 The fairest of my flowers.

"Weep not! I am not grieved with thee,
 Though I thy treasures cull,
 'Tis but to give them back again.
 More richly beautiful
 I lent them to thy loving heart,
 And soon thy Lord shall say,
 'Thy work is done, thy crown is won,
 Rise up and come away.'

"Still tend for me one fleeting hour
 This garden of thy care,
 Days there will be when thou wilt miss
 Thy bud and streamlet there;

Look to the plains of Paradise,
Where joys immortal beam,
There thou wilt find thy bud a flower,
Thy rippling brook a stream.

"One flows in anthems rich in praise
In heaven's eternal rest;
Thy folded bud will blossom fair
On Jesu's tender breast.
Soon shall the singing of the birds
Rejoice thy list'ning ear,
The shadows lengthening in the sun
But tell the dawn is near."

Now on I go, and bless the spot
Where once the brooklet ran,
And trace the wisdom and the love
That led the Husbandman
To grant and guard those precious gifts
To grace my garden ground,
And those, the dearest to my heart,
Christ hath the fairest found.

A. S.

"RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY."—1 TIM. iii. 16.

THOUGHTS ON THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD.

"And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen."—Luke xxiv. 51—53. Read also Acts i.

HIS last act was to bless his people. "While He blessed them." It is not a finished act. *He is blessing now* continually. And He will do it to his saved ones when He comes again. "Come, ye blessed." In that beautiful scene in Matt. xxv. there is not one word to his own of their *sins* or shortcomings; THEY are all cast into the depths of the sea, remembered no more; but their poor, worthless services are all remembered—not a cup of cold water forgotten.

How blessed that all the power and authority of this universe is in human hands (Matt. xxviii. 18 ; John v. 27). Infinite tenderness, love, and sympathy are enshrined in Him who ever liveth at the right hand of God to make intercession for us. One is there who is well able to succour the tempted.

Let us consider the effect of the ascension on the disciples.

1st. They *wondered*. The wonder really was that ever He *left* heaven, *not* that He re-ascended to it. Look at the Son of God in the manger, in helpless infancy. Lo ! He, the King of kings, lays his glory by ! Gaze and *wonder*, then ! Look at Him, the Creator and Upholder of worlds, suffering Himself to be led forth into the wilderness to engage in fearful, agonizing soul-conflict with the prince of darkness, the great usurper. Gaze and *wonder* ! Look at the anguish and sore travail in the garden, and the crisis of the great and awful tragedy on the cross. Gaze and *wonder* !

2nd. They *worshipped* Him (Luke xxiv. 52)—observe, after his visible presence had vanished from their view. Acts of homage are not paid to human beings when they are absent. An old writer has quaintly said, "We never take off our hat to a man a hundred miles off." It proves, therefore, the deity, the omnipresence of Jesus. We are in good company when we pay divine honours to Him, the second Person of the blessed Trinity, for all the angels of God worship *Him*. "*Thou*, Thou, the crucified One, art the King of glory !"

3rd. They *returned* to their sphere of duty. Not left to indulge in idle speculations and vain theories about mysteries beyond their ken. "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven ?" was the angels' rebuke when the clouds received Him out of their sight. They were at first seeking to penetrate those clouds—to scrutinize the mysteries of the spirit-world. There is a point where knowledge and vision end, and where speculation and inquiry become *sin*. The Bible speaks—I listen.

It is silent—I acquiesce. "Hitherto shalt thou come, but *no farther*," it seems to say to our speculations and inquiries. "Verily He is a God that hideth Himself." "Clouds and darkness are round about Him." The angels' words teach us that *man's* office is not to speculate and search into unrevealed mysteries, the *secret things* that belong to Jehovah; but to serve, testify—be witnesses for the Lord.

Remember how Christ dealt with all who during his ministry tried to pry into what was not revealed. The man who asked, "Are there few that be saved?" had no answer—his curiosity was not satisfied; but his own plain duty pointed out, "*Strive* to enter in at the strait gate." Peter's curiosity about John met with an instant rebuke. "Lord," he said, "what shall this man do?" "What is that to thee?" and his plain, obvious duty pointed out, "*follow thou me*." So with Daniel, when he asked what should be the end of all the marvellous prophecies (Dan. xii. 8—13), "Go thy way," and his duty pointed out, "thou shalt stand in thy lot"—the sphere of duty assigned by Providence. Jesus said, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons."

They returned to *Jerusalem*. Oh, what sad and painful associations—associations connected with their dear Lord—are recalled by that name, Jerusalem! where He had been vilified, cast out, crucified, and which now was *full of enemies to them*—destined to be the scene of imprisonment, and torture, and death to some of them. Yet they shrink not—they obey their Lord's parting command, to "begin at Jerusalem," to "tarry there till they be endued with power from on high."

And *how* do they go? Mourning and weeping? Full of fears and trembling? No; "with great joy." Here is a lesson to believers when their dear ones are taken from their sight. Have you ever remarked that the Church of England burial service is all joy—hardly one note of sorrow in it. We will note, in passing, that this service, according to the

intention of the compilers, was never *intended* for any *but believers*.

Where were they found? Constantly in the temple, waiting for the promised blessing. They had, they well knew, an Advocate in the temple *above*—a High Priest within the veil. But did *that* separate them from the house of God below? Quite the contrary. "Such as are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God."

"Thou art gone up on high, to mansions in the skies,
And round thy throne unceasingly the songs of praise arise;
But we are lingering here, with guilt and fears oppress.
Lord, send thy promised Comforter, and lead us to our rest.

"Thou art gone up on high, but Thou wilt come again,
With all the armies of the sky, a great and glorious train.
Oh, by thy saving power so make us live and die,
That we may stand at that dread hour at thy right hand on high!"

E. K.

JESUS CHRIST OUR LIFE.—(2 TIM. i. 1.)

Life, with its youthful hope,
Expanding like the bloom
Of vernal flowers on mossy slope,
Is found in Christ!

Life, with its youthful joy,
Inspiring as the song
Of warblers free from care's annoy,
Is found in Christ!

Life, with its youthful trust,
Confiding as the vine
With graceful tendrils oft out-thrust,
Is found in Christ!

Life, with its youthful grace,
Descending like the dew
Of bounteous heaven on nature's face,
Is found in Christ!

Life, with its youthful love,
Pure as the crystal stream
Proceeding from the throne above,
Is found in Christ!

J. H.

ONWARD AND UPWARD.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY AN HONOURED SERVANT OF CHRIST,
UPON SOME PASSAGES OFTEN MISUNDERSTOOD IN THE
EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

THERE are some remarkable passages in this epistle which are often heard from the lips of the people of God, because they are more or less in their hearts, but which are scarcely understood in their true meaning. The following are amongst the passages I refer to:—

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”—ii. 12.

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”—iv. 13.

“If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”—iii. 11. Add to this a verse in 1 Cor. ix. 27, “I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”—iii. 12.

“I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”—iv. 11.

Words that are often used by believers fail to tell out to our hearts the truths which God designs that they should, because of our want of diligence of heart in the Scriptures, and our want of diligence in reading them, as well as our want of being guided by the Spirit of truth.

If we examine the Epistle to the Philippians carefully, we shall see that the great burden of it is the Creator, God’s beloved Son, who was God’s equal and not his servant, taking upon Him the form of a servant, being made in likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man humbling himself and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

This measure of love is only known to God. Man cannot fathom it, devils cannot comprehend it, neither can

angels. It is, we repeat, only known to God. But He has set it before us. He has a two-fold object in doing this; first to save us from wrath; and then, having so saved us, to teach us to walk before Him and to serve Him according to the pattern of the Lord Jesus.

This is the practical intent of this Epistle to the Philippians. God would have his people to serve Him, even as the Lord Jesus Christ served Him. At the outset of the epistle, the apostle says, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." He does not mean the same thing as we read in Galatians, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Here the apostle teaches us how he was saved from wrath, and how he gained strength from day to day for his daily work; but in the verse in Philippians, "For to me to live is Christ," he means, my whole life is one of serving God as Christ served God: his life was a savour of Christ; and since for him to live was Christ, to die was gain.

And when he says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure;" what salvation does he speak of? It is not the salvation from wrath and hell; Christ worked out that when on the cross He said, "It is finished:" and if I am adding to that work, the end will be not salvation, but damnation. I, as a sinful child of Adam, can do nothing but evil; if I am saved from hell and damnation, it will not be by working for it. When the Jews said, "What must we do that we may work the works of God?" did Christ say to them, "Work out your own salvation." No; the very contrary. He said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." And the apostle said, "To him that worketh not but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," is not said by an unconverted man; nor

is "Work out your own salvation" said to an unconverted man. We must first be saved ere we can work out our own salvation.* The Scripture never says "Work," until after salvation. Were a sinner to set to this work before he is saved he would assuredly fail. Suppose a man whose beggary is complete, but whose debt is very great, and his creditor clamorous. The man is cast into prison; he has not one farthing to pay. A friend comes forward and pays the debt; what has the debtor to do? To be thankful, to be sure. But suppose he will not allow the friend to pay the debt, and in place of his friend paying the debt, suppose he brings a bag of bad money and offers it to his creditors, would his false coin be accepted? would he get a receipt? No; he would have nothing else but the gaol and punishment. Just so, if an unconverted sinner bring his good work to God, he must have eternal judgment. A man may just as well expect to gain heaven by his works of evil as by his good works, seeing that by nature he is a condemned sinner, and that all his works are only sin before God.

If we who are believers have been taught that we are nothing, and that we have a fountain of evil within us which none but God knows ("I the Lord search the heart"), we have discovered that we need to have Jesus as our Saviour first, and after that He has revealed Himself to us as our Saviour from sin, and from its curse and wrath, we shall be glad to take Him as our example. Being enlightened by the Spirit of God, we have discovered that we are proud and rebellious, and that we are a part of that fallen family of Adam whose wish is to exalt itself. That is the devil's wish; in this we need Christ as our example because He was humble and obedient, and this is the key to the Epistle to the Philippians. There we read of Christ's exaltation as well as of his humiliation. We read (ii. 10, 11), "That at the

* A working-man preacher said lately, "A man can't work out of him what is not in him; he must be first saved and then he will work."

name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth;" not only angels and men, but Satan himself will have to bow at the name of Jesus. The hearts of devils and of the wicked will acknowledge that Christ is right, that hell is what they deserve, but they will say it by obligation and not in love. So the example of Christ's humiliation and exaltation will be the perpetual rebuke of the devil and of all those who die in their sins.

And thus we are instructed in this same epistle, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." We particularly need this exhortation. If we were living in a world of drunkards and blasphemers only, we should not be in so much danger; but we are living in a world of self-exalting sinners; therefore we are to work out our salvation from everything that is like vainglory, and, if our consciences are enlightened to see the meaning of this working out, having been saved from hell and wrath, we shall find we have an abundance of work to do, especially when we consider that our life is to be a life like that of Christ Himself. If this is not my object here, if I am not to be a savour of Christ to God and a savour of Christ to men, why should I be left in this world at all? I might go at once to be with Christ. But this is my business, and I am content to abide here a hundred years, if it so please the Lord, that I may glorify Him.

Do not forget that, whilst we are to work out our salvation, there is another truth we have not touched upon, very important indeed, viz., "For it is God which worketh in you, to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Let us now look at the other texts we proposed to consider:—

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

"I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content."

In this last verse it does not only mean that the apostle had learned to suit himself to his circumstances, but he speaks in a much higher sense. He wished to have a mind like Christ. He wished to attain to that state of perfection which was in accordance with the resurrection of Christ, that is to say, to be a dead and risen man. He does not mean, when he says, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead," that he had not a title to the resurrection; but he means this: He knew himself to be risen with Christ at the right hand of God, and to be in Christ as free from condemnation, and accepted in Christ before God as Christ was; so he wished to have a mind consistent with this. He says further on, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." Such blessings as we have in Christ, such a portion as Christ Himself is to us, will, when realized, enable us to speak like the apostle of being content and satisfied. He does not speak first of hunger, but he says first, I know how to be abased. If there were such a thing on earth as a great honour to be poor, then people would not mind being poor, but it is not so; still the apostle was well pleased with this state. And how was this? He had so abundantly learned the abasement of Christ, that he was able to look at everything as with the eye of God. In short, he took occasion, because he made the business of life to be the following the example of Christ, to turn everything to this good account, viz., conformity to Christ. This is the true secret, not to be content with natural things when we have abundance, nor discontented when we are poor, but contented with Christ and with all God's dealings with me, acquainting my soul with Christ, and showing forth to the saints and to the world what Christ is.

When the apostle speaks about apprehending and following after, and not having attained as yet, he means, I have not, by comparison, attained to anything, but I am pressing towards the mark. His figure is something like a

man climbing a mountain as high as heaven. He climbs on, but in proportion to what he has attained, the heights about him bear no comparison. He seems scarcely to have left the earth. So, the apostle, "forgetting the things which are behind" (he leaves out, "I do,") "I press toward the mark." He was always pressing onward and upward, but still he never reached it.

In conclusion, let us observe briefly upon the verse in Corinthians, "I keep under my body," etc.; and that one which alludes to the crown and the prize (chap. ix.). Many run, but one obtains the prize. It has been said in the first of these passages that Paul hinted he might be eternally cast away. The word *castaway* means *disapproved*, and Paul meant that he kept under his body that he might have the approval of God; not that he might be saved, for salvation is the lot of all who believe, whether they be like Abraham or like Lot; but when the reward for serving Christ is the question, we understand the full approval and commendation of God in the day of Christ. Are we all pressing for and aiming after this as Paul did? Supposing a man should preach the gospel well, and yet be caring more for his own things, he could not have the commendation of God. How shall I know whether I please Christ? This must be tried and tested by the Word of God. I must be continually testing and judging my way by the Scriptures if I would have the testimony of the Spirit of God with my spirit that I am working in the way of the Scriptures. It is not having the approval of men, nor even of the brethren. Paul said, It is a small thing to be judged of you. If I am trying my way by the Scripture, I shall be able to say, "In whatever state I am, I am therewith content, or well pleased." The proverb is, "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance." There is no testimony like that of the true happiness of a believer in God and in his ways.

No unregenerate man can say that he has learned the

secret of happiness; to have this he must have the forgiveness of sins; and after being forgiven, if we would still be happy, we must be daily taking the cross, daily pleasing God, daily meditating upon the Scriptures, daily seeking to be like Christ.

"AFTER THESE THINGS;"

OR, THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN
RELATION TO THE FINAL TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL.

By REV. E. HAMILTON, FITZROY, MELBOURNE.

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 47.

IT would be altogether presumptuous to attempt a description of the full extent to which the transformation implied in the new heavens and new earth shall reach. I can glance only at a few leading particulars. It may be safely stated that the change indicated is twofold—physical and spiritual.

I.—The results in regard to the earth.

PARADISE RESTORED.

1.—The earth shall present the aspect of paradise. The curse shall be removed from the face of nature. Purified by the action of fire, and other agencies doubtless, of which we cannot form an adequate conception, the soil shall bring forth spontaneously, and shall yield in abundance the necessities and luxuries of life. The richest beauties and the sweetest perfumes shall delight the outward senses, and whatever is injurious to health, happiness, and life shall have been removed. Hospitals, asylums, alms-houses, penitentiaries, and prisons shall be known only as names of the past and symbols of a dark and miserable era. "Behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the

voice of crying; there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that has not filled his days, for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed; and they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them; they shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat, for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands; they shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble, for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord." "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent's meat; they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

HOLY AND HAPPY FELLOWSHIP.

2.—The social relationships of men shall be completely changed. With the necessities and the luxuries of life in abundance, and with the principles of a pure morality implanted in the conscience of the individual and reigning supreme in the community, it is difficult to conceive the continuation of commerce and trade, or intercourse in buying and selling as it has hitherto been maintained in the world, if it even exist, properly speaking, at all. Under the descent of the Holy Spirit on the primitive church, look to the bright results which were realized. "All that believed were together and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men, as every man had need." Here was a state of social intercourse among men in which there was for the time the absence of the selfish spirit, and the voluntary renunciation of the rights of property for the sake of the general welfare. Again it is said, "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul, neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things

common." What a bright illustration of the liberalising influence of the grace of Jesus Christ on man's selfish and grasping nature! And yet this bright picture of God-like generosity was displayed amid all the imperfections of the present state, in the midst of a world on every side imbued with carnal ambition, and while the full power of the enemy was in operation against the success of God's truth. What then will the earth at large be when the Spirit of God shall fill all hearts, and reign in all families, communities, and kingdoms, and there shall be no race for riches, no thirst for gold, no scale of rank from squalid poverty to a dazzling throne, keeping alive the rankling influence of envy, cupidity, and jealousy—no pride and disdain in one class, and no crouching or fawning fear in another—no over-reaching, undermining, or deceiving for low personal ends—no man claiming exclusive privileges to the inconvenience of another; and all rejoicing in the happiness and prosperity of others as much as in their own? Solomon, who was an eminent type of Christ on his millennial throne, made silver, in his day, to be in Jerusalem as plentiful as stones; and can we suppose that the precious metals, and all precious stones, and riches in general, shall be less widely diffused under the blissful reign of the King of Saints? With the abolition of war there shall be no standing armies to support; with the absence of crime there shall be neither police nor penal establishments to maintain; and, with the exhausting drains that now exist on the prosperity of nations removed, the wealth enjoyed must be inconceivably great. In short, riches, as now understood, must lose their value, and a higher species of wealth come in their place.

SANCTIFIED HEART AND LIFE.

3.—Intellectual, moral, and spiritual greatness shall be the objects most in admiration. The reigning fashion throughout society shall be holiness in heart, speech, and action. The

highest rank shall be a nature shining with the graces of the Holy Spirit of God. The titled nobility shall be the children of God, with their Father's name on their forehead and the emblems of renovated souls on their escutcheons. The fascinating engagements of the times shall be those of multitudes meeting in solemn assemblies to praise and worship the God of salvation. The grandest feats of human effort and skill shall be the exercise of sanctified genius in expounding and proclaiming the wonders of redeeming love and mercy. The loftiest poetry shall be seen in the songs of Zion. All that is counted ennobling and famous in painting, sculpture, music, and the arts in general, shall shine in new and holy features, bearing the stamp of a thorough consecration to the service of Him who reigns in glory, King of all the earth, and King of men. The most illustrious power shall be that which is exercised in lowly, devout, and perfect reverence for the Lord God of Israel. The greatest contest shall turn on the question, who can love the Saviour most? who can honour and serve Him best? And the most renowned achievements will be the highest success in this noble warfare.

EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF DIVINE THINGS.

4.—The wide diffusion of the saving knowledge of Christ shall be a distinguishing feature of these happy times. And it seems as if this knowledge were imparted in some extraordinary manner,—perhaps, like what we call intuition, through the rich communications of the Holy Ghost. At all events, if we take the Scripture testimony according to its plain interpretation—and why should we not?—then what a revolution must take place in our ideas of the mode of spreading knowledge abroad through the voice and the pen, before we can form right conceptions of millennial society! "Saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. . . . They shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying,

Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." The apostle, in his letter to the Hebrews, quotes this passage once and part of it a second time, evidently to give emphasis to it as eminently descriptive of the good times coming. Mark, then, if no one shall need to say to his brother, "Know the Lord," is it not plainly indicated that the present system of teaching, whether from the pulpit or the press, shall be entirely superseded, and that the forms of worship which now obtain must be remodelled? The elements of spiritual knowledge since the beginning of time have been of all branches of truth the most contracted in their range. The heart of man shrinks from the knowledge of God. The mind is dark, and the entrance of the light of heaven reveals the loathsomeness of man's fallen nature, and makes him flee back in terror from the picture of himself. Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Christ came to his own, and his own received Him not. It was thought once by one of the ancients, that if a specimen of perfect virtue were ever revealed to the view of mankind, they would all fall down and worship it. Yet, contrary to this anticipation, when Christ Jesus, the impersonation of heavenly beauty, appeared on earth, men rose up and crucified Him. And it has been the same in every age. The message of God meets with only a partial reception. It is a lamentation that has applied to all generations, "Lord, who hath believed our report?"

SHINING EXCELLENCE OF CHARACTER.

5.—How different will it be when all mankind¹ shall be enabled, under the direct teaching of God's Spirit, to receive with heartfelt relish the knowledge of redemption! What a change passes upon man in the present state of things, when he emerges from the darkness of a mind estranged from God, and of a state of condemnation, to a saving acquaintance

with Jesus Christ! Then the savage passes from the lowest sensual condition to that of high spiritual being. The lion becomes a lamb. The demon departs and an angel appears. Then it is as if new powers of thought and reflection were given to man. His intellect is sharpened into dignifying exercise. His memory is strong to retain holy truth which is formerly rejected. His views undergo an elevating expansion. His affections are set on high and purifying objects. His countenance shines with inward joy and his whole character with heavenly grandeur. He is a new creature. What a delightful scene must be exhibited when the members of the human family, from the least to the greatest, are possessed of mental powers so wonderfully enlarged, that possibly a Bacon and a Newton should be counted no other than children in intellectual grasp, when all countenances shall shine with heavenly radiance,—when every mind shall be light, and every heart shall be love,—when the fellowship of men with men shall be distinguished not only by the absence of all that is mean, depressing, and ruinous, but by the presence of all that is glorifying,—when the characteristic of all shall be that they know, and fear, and love God.

II.—*The results in regard to the heavens.*

The new heavens, however, form the special subject of interest to us—of the church in her militant state. The most important part of the millennial dispensation is the glorified Saviour with his redeemed church in the renovated heavens, now the grand region of influence, power, and glory. In speaking of this subject we tread on high and holy ground. I shall not attempt to penetrate into the unseen, and describe what is indescribable: I shall rather direct my observations in the way of proof.

1. *The resurrection glory of the kingdom of Christ.*—The vast transformation anticipated in this higher department of the new kingdom is the result of Divine skill and power,

and in viewing it we are called to stand in awe and wonder and adore. In the past history of the church there have been many remarkable interpositions of God on behalf of his people.

THE CHURCH CLOTHED WITH IMMORTALITY.

Miraculous power has been put forth in the time of Noah and Lot, especially in the time of Moses in Egypt and in the wilderness, in the time of Joshua in Canaan, and oftentimes in the experience of God's faithful servants and people in subsequent ages. The most astonishing manifestation of Divine power has been in the appearing of Christ. Jesus in his character and work presents to our view a perfect assemblage of miracles. His birth was extraordinary, his life a continued series of wonders, his death a miracle of stupendous grace, his resurrection and ascension to glory a mystery of infinite wisdom, power, and love. Then the pouring down of the Holy Spirit was the display of a remarkable interference with the normal condition of man, as sinful and fallen, to raise him up to dignity and power. And the church of God in all ages is one vast congregation of miraculously-saved sinners. But the interposition expected in establishing Christ's rightful sovereignty on the earth, and in the redemption of his people in heaven, is an event of unparalleled magnitude. We have now the Holy Spirit in the church, and we have the Word of eternal truth, which are, no doubt, fitted to renovate the world, and introduce millennial happiness. But, then, it is not given to man to root out the tares and to introduce the dominion of universal holiness. This is work for the angels. Both tares and wheat grow together till the harvest, and the reapers are the angels. And then I cannot conceive the millennium, in its full glory on earth, without the accompaniment of the redeemed church in heaven. It requires the new heavens peopled with living immortal inhabitants, who are rescued from the grave and invested with

the attributes of eternal life, in order to finish the picture. The millennium would be incomplete without the church of God in past ages being redeemed from death, and being elevated to share in the triumphs of redeeming power and love. After the "day of the Lord's vengeance," comes "the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion."

THE FULL TRIUMPHS OF THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN.

It is the year of God's redeemed. It is the jubilee of the church. It is a season on which the whole host of the ransomed around the throne are represented as concentrating their most earnest anticipations. The souls beneath the altar are at present crying, "How long, how long, O Lord, holy and true, till Thou avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" It is not that the redeemed in glory contemplate with eager delight the executions of Divine wrath on the ungodly. But they joyfully anticipate the period of judgment on the powers of wickedness, as the time when their own redemption shall be complete—when the number of those who have come out of the great tribulation shall be filled up—when the promised inheritance shall be fully possessed—when death shall be swallowed up of victory, and God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces. If the curse is entirely removed, and the enemy is driven from the field, and the dominion of Christ is thoroughly and universally established, then it seems to me a necessity that death should not be allowed to continue its triumphs over those who are *specially* dear to the Saviour. They are precious in his sight, not only as his blood-bought people, but because they are those who have borne the burden and heat of the day—have fought the good fight—have taken up the cross—have died the martyr's death, or have gone to rest in the martyr's spirit. I cannot conceive the bodies of saints of past ages lying crushed in corruption, under the devil, who has power over death, and that, after the devil's power is destroyed,

and when death is no longer under his control, and consequently when it loses its power to keep the children of God in bondage.

It would seem a most anomalous state of things that the enemy should be thoroughly routed—that all creation should be liberated, rejoicing and singing the hymns of triumph, and yet that the most beloved portion of that creation should be lying trampled down and mangled, like victims slain, and still crying, "How long, how long, till deliverance comes?" On the contrary, it seems consistent and harmonious when you suppose that along with the ransomed earth, there is also the resurrection song of the body of Christ, raised finally and for ever from all degradation, clothed in the bridal robes of the wedding season, and entering into the palace of the great King as his own bride, to dwell with Him in enrapturing joy in the new Jerusalem, the magnificent metropolis of the redeemed inheritance. There must be the full triumph of the church in her resurrection and immortal robes, in glory, as well as the victory of the church on earth; otherwise there would be the contradictory aspect of wreck and desolation and bondage in the grave, while at the same time Christ is triumphing, and all his enemies are put under his feet. How can the church be arrayed in robes of glorious beauty, as the bride the Lamb's wife, while her external dress is wrapped up in the rottenness of the tomb? On this supposition the whole display of millennial triumph would be more like a failure and an abortion. But "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

2. *The personal presence of Christ in his own kingdom.*—The Saviour is represented in a variety of language in Scripture as coming personally in power and glory at the time his claim to universal empire is established. Let me merely glance at a few of the more simple proofs of Christ's pre-

millennial advent in glory. By the evangelist we are informed that the Saviour foretold his own advent as "immediately after the tribulation of those days." The church, He had said, would be involved in trouble and distress during his absence, and throughout the whole of the Gentile dispensation. And immediately after that tribulation he says, "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, and then they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory."

NO MILLENNIUM TILL JESUS COMES.

The language quoted seems framed on purpose to exclude the notion of the millennium before his personal appearing. He comes also, according to his own teaching, at a time when the church is divided and engaged in strife. The Lord comes when the unfaithful and quarrelling servant knows not, and outs him in sunder, and appoints him his portion with the hyppoorites, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. This also shuts out the idea of the church ever reaching a state of perfect unity and love before the judgment of Christ's coming. Then the parable of the tares shows that the church has a mixed character of good and bad, and that the enemy is successful, with his corrupting power, against her; and continues to be successful till the time of the harvest, when the angel-reapers come and separate the righteous from the wicked. He also comes when there is not faith on the earth, and while the world is just as it was in the days of Noah and Lot, and the judgment descends and sweeps them away. Daniel tells us that when the great beast of unhallowed power on earth is destroyed, and his body is committed to the flames, then he sees "one like unto the Son of Man, coming in the clouds of heaven, and there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations,

and languages should serve Him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Here, too, the coming of Christ is put at the beginning of the millennium. Paul teaches that the son of perdition, who arises under the falling away of the present dispensation shall be consumed with the spirit or breath of the Lord's mouth, and shall be destroyed by the brightness of his coming. Peter says, "The day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night," at a time in the history of the church when men are saying in unbelief and scorn, "Where is the promise of his coming?" John represents the marriage of the Lamb as come, and his wife as ready, that is, the whole church redeemed from death and corruption, and clothed in immortality, and the time is at the fall of Babylon the Great; and the whole scope and aim of the New Testament is to awaken the hope of the church for the advent of her Lord. All is sorrow and sadness, depression and conflict, trouble and fear, corruption and bondage, till this crisis comes. The present is the widowhood of the church; the coming of Christ is the marriage. "Blessed are they who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."

DEGREES OF GLORY ON EARTH AND IN HEAVEN.

Christ will give rewards differing materially to the church of the millennium on earth, and the suffering church of past dispensations. The church in these two aspects and conditions has various important points of difference in character, in the service rendered and in the title to reward. The church of the millennium on earth is not called into the service of Christ by taking up her cross and denying herself, forsaking all, and following him. She will have no conflict with evil as now, no resisting unto blood striving against sin, no danger of being stoned to death, sawn asunder, or slain with the sword for righteousness' sake; no risk of martyrdom

at the stake or the scaffold, or of being thrust into dungeons, or of suffering the loss of all things for the sake of Christ; no subjection to scorn or injury, in either private or public life, on account of a religious profession; no one suffering, as now, from losses in business, trials in families, afflictions and bereavements in domestic life; and when death does come into a household, seldom as it would appear to do, it must be in a very different aspect, and must be met with very different feelings from what has prevailed in days that are past.

Whereas the church of the heavenly city is brought out of suffering; has fought a good fight with a desperate enemy, and has overcome; has walked in sackcloth all her days; has either perished in martyrdom, or encountered death as a faithful witness for Jesus in the midst of the darkness and fury of hell; has borne the character of a pilgrim and a stranger in a foreign land; has been conformed to Christ as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; has, in short, been baptized into the Lord's death! The exceeding great and precious promises of the Word have all special application to the church of the past. The distinction between the two branches of the one great church of Christ is perhaps alluded to in the 45th Psalm, "where the one is spoken of as the daughter of the king, and brought into his palace with joy and rejoicing, while the other is alluded to as the virgins following. The great rewards that are held out in the Bible to stimulate the energies and hopes of believers are rewards adapted to the church as passing through great tribulation. "Verily, I say unto you, that ye who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "There is no man who hath left houses, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come life everlasting."

The reference is to the coming age or dispensation, and the promise of everlasting life to his servants who are faithful to Him amid conflict and trouble is emphatic, and manifestly conveys the prospect of the rewards of immortality during the happy era that is approaching, and excludes the idea of their bodies lying under the power of death.

CELESTIAL GLORIES.

The millennial church in heaven, then, consisting of true believers in all ages and among all denominations, raised from the dead and received into the kingdom of Christ, where his glories immediately shine, shall be resplendent with peculiar dignity and lustre. They are a palm-bearing multitude, and a crown-wearing host. Dwelling with Him in his divine presence, they shall be like Him, for they shall see Him as He is. They shall be clothed in his beauty, and shall enjoy fellowship, honour, and bliss, to which those on earth in the millennial church can lay no claim. They shall walk in the unclouded radiance of infinite majesty. "They are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat, for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God Himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." This could not apply to the millennial church on earth, for she has no sorrow on account of which to need consolation; her reign is one of continued triumph and joy. Those, however, who now do his commandments in the face of malignant and untiring opposition, and are faithful to the death, shall receive a crown of life. The reward enjoyed shall mark the previous struggle. And it is to him that overcometh the promise is made—"I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne." All who gain the victory through the blood of

the Lamb shall have "a right to the tree of life, and shall enter in through the gates into the city," and shall have access to the "pure river of the water of life, which proceeds clear as crystal out of the throne of God and the Lamb: and there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve Him; and they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads: and there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."

PRESENT DUTIES.

The course of the visible church, then, consisting of all denominations and scattered over the whole world, looks in two directions—the wheat for the garner, the chaff for the fire—the wise virgins for the marriage supper, and the foolish to find the door shut—the believing for crowns of glory, the unbelieving for eternal shame and disappointment. All the agencies in operation for extending the kingdom of Christ have for their object the preparation of a people for the heavenly inheritance. Those who do not avail themselves of the opportunity to escape from the wrath to come shall be ranked among the uncircumcised Egyptian host, which sink like lead in the mighty deep. The separation of the two classes is an impending event, and all are warned to keep themselves ready. "The Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house and gave authority to his servants and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch; watch therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning, lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping: and what I say unto you, I say unto all, watch."

The prayerful, the active, and the prepared servant shall obtain a glorious reward; the slothful, carnal, and unbelieving servant shall be overwhelmed in disgrace. In all the work,

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